
THE SOCIETY OF WRITERS TO THE SIGNET

A TREATISE ON MAN;

HIS

INTELLECTUAL FACULTIES

AND HIS

EDUCATION.

By M. HÈLVETIUS.

Honteux de m'ignorer,
Dans mon être, dans moi, je cherche à pénétrer.
Voltaire, Dis. VI. de la Nat. de l'Homme,

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH, WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES,

By W. HOOPER, M. D.

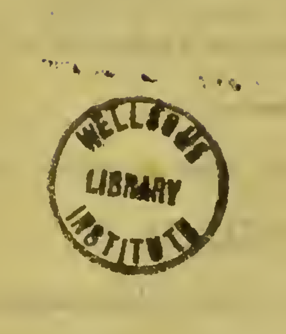
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CONTENTS.

VOLUME II.

SECTION V.

SECTION VII.

SECTION VIII.

That

That

SECTION IX.

SECTION X.

RECAPITULATION

ON

ON MAN;

HIS

INTELLECTUAL FACULTIES

AND HIS

EDUCATION.

SECTION V.

OF THE ERRORS AND CONTRADICTIONS OF THOSE, WHOSE PRINCIPLES DIFFERING FROM MINE, REFER THE UNEQUAL DEGREES OF UNDERSTANDINGS, TO THE UNEQUAL DEGREES OF PERFECTION IN THE ORGANS OF THE SENSES.

M. ROUSSEAU and I are of opposite opinions concerning this question. It is not my design in refuting some of his ideas, to criticise the Emilius; that work is at once worthy of its author and of the public esteem*. But M. Rousseau being a too close imitator of Plato, has, perhaps, frequently sacrificed pre-

* The fury with which the monks and priests have persecuted M. Rousseau, is an unsuspected proof of the excellence of his work. Common authors are free from persecution.

cision to eloquence; and has fallen into contradictions which he would doubtless have avoided, if he had been a more scrupulous observer of his own ideas, and more attentively compared them with each other.

I propose, in the examination of the principal assertions of this author, to shew, that almost all his errors are the necessary consequences of the following principle too lightly admitted:

That the inequality in understandings is the effect of the greater or less degree of perfection of the organs of the senses*, and that our virtues, as well as our talents, are equally dependent on the diversity of our temperaments.

CHAP. I.

CONTRADICTIONS OF THE AUTHOR OF EMILIUS CONCERNING THE INEQUALITY OF UNDERSTANDINGS.

THE mere assemblage of M. Rousseau's ideas will prove their contrariety.

* In this question, regard is had only to that small difference in organization, which nature has made among men endowed with all their senses.

Contradictions of Rousseau on the inequality of understanding.

1. PROPOSITION.

He says, Letter 3. p. 116. vol. v. of the Eloisa*:

"To change the characters we must change the "temperaments; to desire in like manner to change "the understandings, and of a fool to make a man of "talents, is to desire to make a fair man brown. How "can we form the hearts and understandings by one "common model? Do not our talents, our virtues, "and vices, and consequently our characters, depend "entirely on our organization."

2. PROPOSITION.

He says, p. 164, 165, 166. vol. v. of the Eloisa,

"When children are brought up in their original "simplicity, whence do they derive those vices of "which they have seen no example; those passions "they have had no occasion to feel: those prejudices "that nothing can have given them? The faults of "which we accuse nature, are not its work, but ours. "A vicious speech in the mouth of a child, is a strange "plant whose seed is borne by the wind."

In the first of those quotations, M. Rousseau thinks that it is to our organization we owe our vices and passions, and consequently our characters.

* I take most of my quotations from let. 3. vol. v. of the Eloisa. It is an extract from the Emilius made by the author himself. In this letter he has assembled almost all the principles of his great work.

In the second, on the contrary, he thinks (and I think with him) that we are born without vices, because we are born without ideas; but for the same reason we are also born without virtue. If vice be a stranger to human nature, virtue must be a stranger also. Both of them are not, and cannot be any other than acquisitions (1). For which reason, a child is supposed not capable of sinning till seven years old, as before that age it has no precise idea of justice or injustice, or any knowledge of its duty towards mankind.

3 PROPOSITION.

M. Rousseau says, p. 63. vol. iii. of Emilius, "That "the sentiment of justice is innate in the heart of man." He repeats, p. 107. of the same vol. "That there is "at the bottom of our souls an innate principle of "virtue and justice."

4. PROPOSITION.

He says, p. 11. vol. iii. of Emilius, "The interior "voice of virtue cannot be heard by the poor (2), who "only think how to subsist." He adds, p. 161. vol. iv. ibid. "The common people have few ideas of "what is fair and honest," and concludes, p. 112. vol. iii. "that before the age of reason, man does "good and evil without knowing it.

We see, that if in the third of these propositions M. Rousseau believes the idea of virtue to be innate, in

in the fourth he believes it to be an acquisition; and he is there right. It is a perfect legislation only that gives all men a perfect idea of virtue, and compels them to be honest.

All men would have been just, if Heaven had engraved on their hearts, while in the cradle, the true principles of legislation; but that it has not done.

It was the will of Heaven therefore that men should owe to reflection the excellence of their laws: that the knowledge of those laws should be an acquisition, and the produce of genius improved by time and experience. In fact, I would say to M. Rousseau, if there were an innate sentiment of justice and virtue, that sentiments, like those of corporeal pleasure and pain, would be common to all men, to the poor as well as the rich, to the common people as well as the great; a man would at every time of life distinguish good from evil (3).

But M. Rousseau says, p. 109. vol. iii. of Emilius, "Without an innate principle of virtue, should we see "the just man and the honest citizen concur, to his "own prejudice, in the public good?" I answer, no one has ever concurred in the public good to his own prejudice. The heroic citizen, who risks his life for a crown of glory, to merit the public esteem, and to free his country from servitude, yields to the sentiment that ppears to him the most agreeable. Why should he not find his happiness in the exercise of virtue, in the esteem of the public, and the pleasure attached to that esteem? Why should he not expose his life for

his country, when the sailor and the soldier, the one in a storm, and the other in the trenches, expose theirs every day for a shilling? The generous spirited man, who seems to concur in the public good to his own prejudice, is therefore led to it by the sentiment of a noble interest. Why does M. Rousseau deny in this place that interest is the sole and universal motive of men's actions, and allow it in a thousand other parts of his works? He says, p. 73. vol. iii. of Emilius, "A "man may make what pretence he pleases of prefer-"ring my interest to his own, and colour the lie with "what demonstration he will, yet I am still very sure "that it is one." And, p. 137. vol. i. "When my "pupil engages with me, I would always have him "find a present and sensible interest to fulfil his en-"gagement; believe and that if he ever fail, the "falsehood may draw on him evils which he will see "arise from the order of things."

In this quotation, if M. Rousseau think himself the more secure of the promise of his pupil, as that pupil has more interest to keep it, why say, vol. i. p. 130. of Emilius, "He who keeps his promise merely for his "profit and interest, is scarcely more bound than if he "had never promised." Such a man will certainly not be bound by his promise, but by his interest. Now this obligation is full as good as another, and M. Rousseau does not doubt of it when he would have *interest bind his pupil to his promise.* Men are, and ever will be so much the more faithful observers of their promise

as

as they have more interest to keep it. Whoever fails in this case is more fool than knave.

I own that it is rare to find such palpable contradictions in the principles of the same work. The only way of accounting for this moral phenomenon is, to allow that M. Rousseau, in his Emilius, has less regard to the truth of what he says, than to the manner in which he says it. The result of these contradictions is, that the ideas of justice and virtue are real acquisitions.

CHAP. II.

OF THE UNDERSTANDING, AND OF TALENTS.

What is in man the understanding? The assemblage of his ideas. To what sort of understanding do we give the name of talent? To an understanding concentred in one subject; that is to say, to a large assemblage of ideas of the same kind.

Now, if there be no innate ideas, (as M. Rousseau allows in several parts of his work,) understanding and talent must be acquisitions in us, and both of them, as I have already said, have therefore for generating principles:

 1. Cor-

1. Corporeal sensibility; without which we can receive no sensations.

2. Memory; that is, the faculty of recollecting sensations received.

3. An interest to induce us to compare our sensations with each other (4); that is, to observe with attention the resemblances and differences, and agreements and disagreements that various objects have with each other.

It is this interest that fixes the attention, and that in men, organized in the common manner, is the productive principle of their understanding.

The talents, regarded by some as the effect of a particular disposition to a particular sort of understanding, are, in reality, nothing more than the produce of the attention applied to ideas of a certain sort. I compare the mass of human knowledge to the keys of an organ. The several talents are the stops, and the attention, put in action by interest, is the hand, that can indifferently apply itself to one or other of the stops.

In short, if we acquire even the sentiment of self-love, and if we cannot love ourselves without having previously felt the sensation of corporeal pleasure and pain, all then in us is acquisition.

Our understanding, our talents, our vices and virtues, our prejudices and characters, necessarily formed by the assemblage of our ideas and sentiments, are not therefore the effect of our several temperaments.

Our

Our passions themselves are not dependent on them. I shall cite the people of the North as a proof of this truth. Their phlegmatic temperament we are told, is the particular effect of their climate and nourishment; yet are they as susceptible of pride, envy, ambition, avarice, and superstition, as the more sanguine* and bilious inhabitants of the South (5). When we look into history, we see nations change their characters on a sudden, without any change in the nature of their climates, or in their nourishment.

I will also add, that if all characters, as M. Rousseau pretends†, *were good and sound of themselves*, that goodness being universal and consequently independent of the diversity of temperaments, would make against his opinion. Would to Heaven that goodness were the lot of man! It is with regret that on this point I again differ from M. Rousseau. What pleasure would it be to find all men good! But by persuading them that they are so, I should relax their ardour to become so. I should call them good and make them bad.

Is a man honest? Does he serve his sovereign, and merit his confidence, when he hides from him the miseries of his people? No: but when he informs him of them, and points out the means of relieving them.

* This fact clearly proves that the passions above-mentioned are not the effects of the diversity of temperaments, but as I have said, of the love of power.

† Page 109, vol. v. of Eloisa.

He who deceives mankind is not their friend. Who are then the friends to kings? What courtier is always true to his prinee? What man is always true to himself? The bully says that every one is brave, that he may be thought so himself: and sometimes the Shaftesburyan, who is the greatest knave, maintains with the utmost vehemenee the original goodness of man.

With regard to myself, I shall not amuse mankind into a fatal security concerning this matter. I shall not repeat to them incessantly that they are good. If the legislature, less guarded against vice, shall neglect the establishment of laws proper to suppress it, I shall not commit treason against humanity; I shall dare to speak the truth, and to discuss a question that I cannot do without shewing relatively to my subject, that on this point M. Rousseau is not more consistent with himself than on the former.

CHAP. III.

OF THE GOODNESS OF MAN IN THE CRADLE.

I LOVE you, O my fellow citizens! and my chief desire is to be useful to you. I doubtless desire your approbation;

approbation; but shall I owe your esteem and applause to a lie? A thousand others will deceive you; I shall not be their accomplice. Some will say you are good, and flatter the desire you have to think yourselves so: believe them not. Others will say you are wicked, and in like manner will say false. You are neither the one nor the other.

No individual is born good or bad. Men are the one or the other, according as a similar or opposite interest unites or divides them (6). Philosophers suppose men to be born in a state of war. A common desire to possess the same things arms them from the cradle, say they, against each other.

The state of war, without doubt, closely follows the instant of their birth. The peace between them is of short duration. They are not however both enemies. Goodness or badness is an incident to them; it is the consequence of their good or bad laws. What we call in man his goodness or moral sense, is his benevolence to others; and that benevolence is always proportionate to the utility they are of to him. I prefer my countrymen to strangers, and my friends to my countrymen. The prosperity of my friend is reflected on me. If he become more rich and powerful, I participate in his riches and power. Benevolence to others is therefore the effect of love for ourselves. Now if self-love, as I have proved in the fourth section, be the necessary effect of the faculty of sensation

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our love for others, whatever the Shaftesburyans may say, is in like manner the effect of the same faculty.

What in fact is that original goodness or moral sense, so much boasted of by the English*? What clear idea can we form of such a sense†, and on what fact do we

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* It is on a constant and general observation this proverb is founded: *the misfortune of others is but a dream.* Experience therefore does not prove that men are so good.

† If they admit a moral sense, why not an algebraic or chymical sense? Why should we create a sixth sense in man? Is it to give him clearer ideas of morality? But what is morality? *The science of the means invented by men to live together in the most happy manner possible.* This science, if those in power do not oppose its progress, will advance in proportion as the people acquire more knowledge. Men would have morality to be the work of God; but it makes every where a part of the legislation of the people: now legislation is the work of man. If God be esteemed the author of morality, it is because he is the author of human reason, and morality the offspring of that reason. To indentify God and morality is idolatry; it is to deify the work of men. They have made compacts; morality is nothing more than the collection of these compacts. The true object of this science is the happiness of the majority. *Salus populi suprema lex esto.* If the morality of mankind produces so often a contrary effect, it is because the powerful direct all its precepts to their particular advantage; it is because they constantly repeat, *Salus gubernantium suprema lex esto.* It is in short, because the morality of most nations is now nothing more than a collection of the means employed, and the precepts dictated by the powerful to secure their authority, and to be unjust with impunity.

But can such precepts be respected? Yes, when they are consecrated by edicts, by absurd laws, and above all, by the dread of

power

found its existence? On the goodness of men? But there are also, persons who are envious and liars, *omnis homo mendax.* Will they say in consequence, that those men have in them an immoral sense of envy, and a lying sense. Nothing is more absurd than this theological philosophy of Shaftsbury; and yet the greatest part of the English are as fond of it as the French were formerly of their music. It is not the same with other nations. No stranger can understand the one or bear the other. It is a web on the eye of the English. It must be taken away before they can see clearly.

According to their philosophy, the man indifferent and seated at his ease, desires the happiness of others:

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power. It is then they acquire a legal authority while that power continues.

There is then nothing more difficult than to recal morality to its true object. For which reason we find a wise legislation, and a pure morality in those countries only where, as in England, the people have a part in the administration, where the nation is the sovereign; and where the laws, constantly established in favour of the people in power, are necessarily conformable to the interest of the majority.

According to this summary idea of the science of morality, it is evident, that like others, it is the produce of experience and meditation, and not of *a moral sense;* that it may, like other sciences, be daily improved; and that nothing authorizes man to suppose he has a sixth sense, of which it is impossible to form any clear idea.

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but as being indifferent, he does not, and cannot desire any thing. The states of desire and indifference are contradictory. Perhaps the state of perfect indifference is even impossible. Experience teaches us that man is born neither good nor bad: that his happiness is not necessarily connected with the misery of others: that on the contrary, from a good education, the idea of my own happiness will be always more or less closely connected in my memory with that of my fellow-citizens; and that the desire of the one will produce in me the desire of the other: whence it follows, that the love of his neighbour is in every individual the effect of the love of himself. The most clamorous declaimers for original goodness* have not moreover been always the greatest benefactors to humanity.

When the welfare of England was at stake, the idle Shaftesbury, that ardent apostle of the beauty of morality, would not, we are told, even go to the parliament-house to save it. It was not the sense of the beauty of morality, but the love of glory and of their country that formed Horatius Cocles, Brutus, and Scævola†. The English philosophers will in vain tell

* The inventors of the beauty of morality are ignorant of the contempt in which their romance must be held by those, who in quality of magistrates, have opportunities of knowing mankind.

† The so much boasted system of the moral sense, is nothing at bottom but the system of innate ideas destroyed by Locke, and published again under a different form and title.

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Vagueness of certain metaphisical terms.

me that beauty of morality is a sense that is developed with the human fœtus, and in a certain time* renders man compassionate to the misfortune of his brethren. I can form an idea of my five senses, and of the organs by which they are produced; but I confess I have no more idea of a moral sense, than of a moral castle and elephant.

How long will men continue to use words that are void of meaning, and that not conveying any clear and determinate idea (7), ought to be for ever banished to the schools of theology†. Do they mean by this moral sense the sentiment of compassion felt at the sight of an unhappy object? But to compassionate another man's miseries, we must first know what he suffers, and for that purpose must have felt pain. A

* The *moral sense*, like puberty, say the Shaftesburyans, does not display itself in us till toward a certain age. This sense according to them, is a sort of moral excrescence. Now I ask, what is a sense or excrescence that is not corporeal? We must reckon a good deal on the faith of the reader to offer him so absurd a supposition; and which besides explains nothing that we cannot explain without it.

(The advocates for the moral sense will say, with plausibility at least, that these arguments of M. Helvetius are like those of a blind man who denies the beauty of colours, because he can form no idea about it; and that all our anthor's specious reasonings are nothing to the strong convictions of their own minds. T.)

† *The moral sense* appears to me to be one of those metaphysical or moral beings that we ought never to cite in a book of philosophy. It has been sometimes introduced in the Italian comedy, where it has enfeebled the action: it is scarcely tolerable in the prologues.

 compassion

compassion on report supposes also a knowledge of misery. Which are the evils moreover that in general we are most sensible of? Those which we suffer with the most impatience, and the remembrance of which is consequently the most habitually present to us. Compassion therefore is not an innate sentiment.

What do I feel at the presence of an unhappy person? A strong emotion. What produces it? The remembrance of pains to which men are subjeet, and to which I myself am exposed (8): such an idea troubles me, makes me uneasy, and as long as the unfortunate person is present I am afflicted. When I have assisted him, and see him no more, a calm takes place insensibly in my mind; for in proportion as he is distant from me, the remembrance of the miseries that his presence recalled, insensibly vanishes: when therefore I was afflicted at his presence, it was for myself I was afflieted. Whieh in fact are the evils I commiserate most. They are, as I have already said, not only those I have felt, but those I may still feel: those evils being most present to my memory, strike me most foreibly. My affliction for the miseries of an unhappy person, is always in proportion to the fear I have of being afflicted with the same miseries. 'I would, if it were possible, destroy in him the very root of his misfortune, and thereby free myself at the same time from the fear of suffering in the same manner*. The love

* Yet should some neighbour feel a pain
Just in the parts where I complain;

love of others is therefore never any thing else in man than an effect of the love of himself (9), and consequently of his corporeal sensibility. In vain does M. Rousseau repeat incessantly *that all men are good, and all the first movements of nature right.* The necessity of laws proves the contrary. What does this necessity imply? That the different interests of men render them good or bad; and that the only method to form virtuous citizens, is to unite the interest of the individual with that of the public.

At the same time, what man is less convinced than M. Rousseau of the original goodness of characters. He says, vol. i. p. 179. of Emilius, "Every man who "has not known pain, is ignorant of the tenderness "of humanity, or the sweetness of commiseration: "his heart is not affected by any thing; he is not "sociable, but a monster among his fellow-creatures." He adds, p. 200. vol. ii. "Nothing, in my opinion, "is more true and beautiful than this maxim; *we "lament in others those evils only from which we are not "exempt*: it is for this reason, (he adds,) that the "prince is without pity for his subject, the rich ob-

How many a message would he send?
What hearty prayers, that I should mend;
Enquire what regimen I kept;
What gave me ease, and how I slept;
And more lament when I was dead,
Than all the snivelers round my bed. SWIFT. T.

" durate toward the poor, and the nobleman toward " the plebeian."

After these maxims, how maintain the original goodness of man, and pretend that *all characters are good?*

A proof that humanity is nothing more in man than the effect of the misfortunes he has known either by himself (10) or by others is, that of all the ways to render him humane and compassionate, the most efficacious is to habituate him from his most tender age to put himself in the place of the miserable. Some have in consequence treated compassion as a weakness: let them call it so if they please; this weakness will always be in my eyes the first of virtues (11), because it always contributes the most to the happiness of humanity.

I have proved that compassion is not either a moral sense, or an innate sentiment, but the pure effect of self-love. What follows? That it is this same love, differently modified, according to the different education we receive, and the circumstances, and situations in which chance has placed us, which renders us humane or obdurate: that man is not born compassionate, but that all may and will become so when the laws, the form of government, and their education lead them to it.

O! you, to whom heaven has intrusted the legislative power, let your administration be gentle, your laws sagacious, and you will have subjects humane, valiant, and virtuous! But if you alter either those

laws,

laws, or that wise administration, those virtuous citizens will expire without posterity, and you will be surrounded by wicked men only ; for the laws will make them such. Man, by nature indifferent to evil, will not give himself up to it without a motive : the happy man is humane ; he is the couching lion.

Unhappy is the prince who confides in the original goodness of characters (12) ; M. Rousseau supposes its existence ; experience denies it : whoever consults that, will learn that the child kills flies (13), beats his dog, and strangles his sparrow ; that the child, born without humanity, has all the vices of the man.

The man in power is often unjust ; the sturdy child is the same : when he is not restrained by the presence of his master, he appropriates by force, like the man in power, the sweetmeat or play-thing of his companion. He does that for a coral or a doll which he would do at a mature age for a title or a scepter. The uniformity in the manner of acting at those two ages made M. de la Mothe say, *It is because the child is already a man, that the man is still a child.*

C'est que deja l'enfant est homme,
Et que l'homme est encore enfant.

The original goodness of characters cannot be maintained by any argument. I will even add, that in man, goodness and humanity cannot be the work of nature, but of education only.

CHAP. IV.

THE MAN OF NATURE CANNOT BUT BE CRUEL.

What does the prospect of nature present to us? A multitude of beings destined to devour each other. Man in particular, say the anatomists, has the tooth of a carnivorous animal; he ought therefore to be voracious, and consequently cruel and bloody. Flesh, moreover, is his most wholesome nourishment, and the most conformable to his organization: his preservation, like that of almost all the species of animals, is connected with the destruction of others.

Men dispersed among the vast forests are at first hunters. When they become more numerous, and are forced to find their nourishment within a smaller space, necessity makes them shepherds; when still more multiplied, they become at last husbandmen. Now in all these several situations, man is born a destroyer of animals, either by eating their flesh, or by defending against them the fruits, grain, or pulse, necessary to his subsistence.

The man of nature is his own butcher, and his own cook; his hands are always imbrued in blood; habituated to murder, he must be deaf to the cry of pity.

If

If the stag at bay affects me ; if his tears excite mine, this object so affecting by its novelty, is agreeable to the savage whom habit has rendered obdurate.

The most pleasing melody to an inquisitor are the groans of torture : he laughs by the side of the fire in which the heretic is burning. This inquisitor, an authorized assassin of the law, preserves, even in the bosom of cities, the ferocity of the man of nature; he is a man of blood. The nearer we return to that state, the more we accustom ourselves to murder, the less it costs. Why is the lowest of the butchering tribe, in default of an executioner, obliged to perform his functions? Because his profession renders him void of compassion. He whom a good education has not accustomed to see, in the misfortunes of others, to what he is himself exposed, will be always obdurate, and often sanguinary. The common people are so; they have not the understanding to be humane. It is curiosity, they say, that carries them to Tyburn or the Greve: yes, the first time ; if they go again, it is cruelty*. They are moved and weep at executions; and so does the man of education at a tragedy, but yet the representation is agreeable to him.

He that maintains the original goodness of men, designs to deceive them. Must there be in morals, as

* This is certainly the case with great numbers ; but are there not many carried thither by a desire to sympathize with the unhappy victims in their last moments ? T.

well as in religion, so many hypocrites, and so few that are sincere? Can the regard with which a reciprocal fear inspires two persons, nearly equal in force, be taken for a natural goodness in human nature, when even the polished man, not restrained by that fear, becomes cruel and sanguinary?

Reflect on the scene of a field of battle immediately after a victory, while the plain is yet strewed with the dead and the dying: when avarice and rapine cast their greedy looks on the bloody habiliments of the victims, yet panting for the public welfare: when void of pity, they approach the unhappy men, and by stripping them redouble their pangs. The tears, the frightful looks of agony, and the piercing cries of torture affect them not: they are blind to the tears, and deaf to the groans of the expiring wretches.

Such is man in the field of victory: is he more humane on an Eastern throne (14), where he commands the law? What use does he there make of his power? Is he busied in promoting the felicity of his people, in relieving their wants, and easing the weight of their chains? The East, far from being free from the insupportable yoke of tyranny, feels its weight each day increase. It is by the fear he inspires, by the barbarity he exercises on his trembling slaves, that the tyrant measures his grandeur and his glory; each day is marked by the invention of some still more cruel punishment: he who laments in his presence the lot of the people, is his enemy; and he who in this case

gives

gives advice to his master, says the poet Saadi, *washes his hands in his own blood.*

Unconcerned for the misfortunes of the Romans, Arcadius, solely employed in feeding a chicken, was forced by the barbarians to abandon Rome ; he retired to Ravenna, and was pursued by the enemy; one army alone remained, which opposed the invaders; it was attacked and beaten; he was told of the defeat. Rome, they said, a prey to the avarice and cruelty of the conquerors, is pillaged ; the citizens have fled naked ; they had not time to carry any thing with them. Arcadius interrupted the narration hastily : Have they, says he, saved my chicken ?

Such is man crowned with the diadem of despotism, or the laurels of victory (15). Freed from the fear of the laws or resentment, his injustice knows no other bounds than his will. What then is become of that original goodness which M. Rousseau sometimes ascribes, and sometimes denies to man ?

Let me not be accused of denying the existence of good men : I know there are such, who tenderly sympathize in the miseries of their fellow-creatures : but the humanity of these is the effect of their education, not their nature.

Had these men been born among the Iroquois, they would have adopted their barbarous customs. If M. Rousseau be again on this point at contradiction with himself, it is because his principles are at contradiction with his own experience ; and because he writes

writes sometimes after the one, and sometimes after the other. Will he then for ever forget that man, born without ideas or character, and indifferent to good and evil, has no gift from nature but corporeal sensibility; that in his cradle he is nothing; that his virtues and vices, his factitious passions, his talents, his prejudices, and even his self-love, are all acquired.

CHAP. V.

M. ROUSSEAU BELIEVES BY TURNS EDUCATION TO BE USEFUL AND PERNICIOUS.

I. PROPOSITION.

M. Rousseau says, p. 109. vol. v. of Eloisa, "Education confines the natural parts, effaces the grand "qualities of the soul, to substitute such as are trifling "and apparent, but have no reality." If this fact be admitted, nothing is more dangerous than education. Yet I would say to M. Rousseau, if such be the force of instruction over us, that it substitutes trifling qualities for the great ones which we receive from nature, and thus changes our characters for the worse: why cannot this same instruction substitute grand qualities for the trifling which we may receive from nature, and thus

thus change our characters for the better? The heroism of rising republics proves the possibility of such a metamorphosis.

II. PROPOSITION.

M. Rousseau. p. 121. vol. v. of Eloisa, makes Volmar say, "To render my children docile, my wife has "substituted in the place of the yoke of discipline "one more inflexible, that of necessity." But if we can make use of necessity in education, and if its power be irresistible, we may then correct the faults of children, by changing their characters, and by changing them for the better.

In one of those two propositions, M. Rousseau is not only at contradiction with himself, but also with experience.

What men in fact have given the greatest examples of virtue? Is it those savages of the North or the South, the Laplanders and Papoux, without education; those men of nature, if I may so express myself whose language does not consist of more than five or six sounds or cries? No, doubtless; virtue consists in sacrificing what we call our own interest to that of the public. But such a sacrifice supposes men to be already assembled in societies, and the laws of those societies improved to a certain degree. Where do we find heroes? Among nations more or less polished; such as the Chinese, the Japanese, the Greeks, the Romans, English, Germans, French, &c.

Who

Who is, in all society, the man most detestable? The man of nature; who having made no convention with his fellows, obeys nothing but his caprice, and the present sentiment with which he is possessed.

III. PROPOSITION.

After having repeated, *that education effaces the great qualities of the soul,* could we imagine that M. Rousseau, p. 192. vol. iv. of Emilius, should divide men into two classes: *one of such as think, and the other such as do not think?* A difference, according to him, entirely dependent on the difference of education. What a striking contradiction! Is he more consistent with himself, when after having regarded the understanding as the mere effect of organization, and having in consequence declared against all sort of instruction, he regards that of Sparta, which began at the breast, as of the utmost importance. But it will be said, in opposing all instruction, M. Rousseau's object was merely to protect youth against the danger of a bad education. On this point all the world will agree with him, *that it is better for a child to have no education than one that is bad.* It is not therefore on such a trivial truth that M. Rousseau can insist: it is a proof of the want of precision in his ideas on this subject, that in several other parts of his works, he allows that some instruction be given to children; provided, says he, that it be not premature. Now on this point he again contradicts himself.

IV. PRO-

IV. PROPOSITION.

He says, p. 153. vol. v. of Eloisa, "The progress of "nature is the best; it should not especially be res-"trained by a premature education." Now if there be a premature education, it is undeniably that of the nurse; she should therefore give no instruction to her child. Let us see if this be the constant opinion of M. Rousseau.

V. PROPOSITION.

He says, vol. v. p. 135, 136. ibid. "Nurses ought, "from the most tender age, to suppress in children "the fault of being clamorous: the same cause that "makes a child squall at three years, makes him re-"fractory at twelve, a brawler at twenty, imperious at "thirty, and insupportable all his life." M. Rousseau therefore here allows that nurses should suppress in children the fault of squalling; children in the cradle are therefore already susceptible of instruction; now if they be, why not begin their education with the most early age? Why hazard the success of it by making them have at once to encounter the faults of childhood, and the habit of those faults? Why not hasten to stifle, while the passions are yet weak, the seeds of the greatest vices? M. Rousseau has no doubt in this matter of the force of education.

VI. PROPOSITION.

He says, vol. v. p. 158. ibid. "A mother who is a little

" little vigilant, has in her own hands the passions of " her children." She is therefore in possession of their characters: for what in fact is a character? The produce of a lively and constant affection, and consequently of a strong passion. Now if a mother has an absolute command over the passions of her children, she has it over their characters also. He who can dispose of the cause, is master of the effect.

But why does Julia, always at contradiction with herself, repeat incessantly that she makes little account of the instruction of her children, and abandons the care of it to nature, when in fact, *there is no education,* if I may use the expression, *more education than hers:* and in short, in this kind of way she leaves nothing for nature to do?

It is with pleasure that I seize this opportunity of praising M. Rousseau; his views are sometimes extremely refined. The means employed by Julia in the instruction of her children are frequently the best possible. All mankind, for example, are apes and mimics: vice is acquired by contagion. Julia knew this, and wished in consequence that every one, even to her domestics, should concur, by their example and their conversation, to inspire her children with those virtues, which she would have them possess. But is such a plan of instruction practicable in domestic education? I doubt it: and if by the confession of Julia, one brutal or flattering valet be sufficient

cient to destroy a whole education*, where find such domestics as that plan of instruction requires? To

* After this confession of Julia, will it be believed that M. Rousseau reproaches me with having allowed too much to education? But no contradiction can stop the author of Emilius.

"Two men, says he, of the same rank receive nearly the "same instructions, and yet what a difference do we see in their "understandings? To explain the difference, let us suppose, he "adds, p. 114. vol. v. of Eloisa, that certain objects have acted on "the one and not on the other; that some trifling circumstances "have struck them differently without their perceiving it: all rea-"sonings are but subtilties." But I reply to M. Rousseau, to assert that the brutal or flattering character of a domestic is sufficient to spoil an education; that an indiscreet burst of laughter (p. 216. vol. i. of Emilius) can retard an education six months, is to allow that those same trifling circumstances you so much affect to despise, are sometimes of the greatest importance, and consequently that the education of two men cannot be precisely the same. Now whence comes it, that after having so authentically recognised the influence of the most trifling causes on education, M. Rousseau should compare (p. 113, 114. vol. v. of Eloisa) the reasonings on this subject to those of astrologers? "To explain, "says he, how men who appear to have been born under the same "aspect of the heavens, experience such different fortunes, the "astrologers deny that those men were born at the same instant." But I reply to M. Rousseau, that it is not in this negation the mistake of astrologers consists.

To say that the stars, in an instant, how small soever it may be, pass over a space greater or less, according to the greater or less velocity with which they move, is a mathematical truth.

To asert, that for want of a clock sufficiently accurate, or an

conclude,

conclude, is what appears impossible in a domestic, equally impossible in a public education? I shall now examine that matter.

CHAP. VI.

OF THE HAPPY USE THAT MIGHT BE MADE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION OF SOME IDEAS OF M. ROUSSEAU.

In private education there is no choice of masters; such as excel are rare; they must be dear; and there are few private persons rich enough to pay them as they deserve. It is not so with a public education; if legislators annex a large revenue to houses of instruction, pay the instructors liberally, give them a certain importance, and render their employ honourable*,

observation sufficiently exact, two men who are supposed to be born at the same instant, did not see the light at the moment the stars were precisely in the same position, with regard to them both, is often a doubt sufficiently well founded.

But to believe without any proof, that the stars influence the fate and characters of men, is a folly, and it is that of astrologers.

* What is necessary, says M. Rousseau, to make a child learn? That he have an interest in learning. What is necessary to induce a master to improve his method of teaching! That he

they

they will render it in general desirable. Government will then have the choice of so large a number of intelligent men, that they will always find enough for the places they are to fill. It is the want of rewards that occasions the want of talents of every kind.

But in the plan of education proposed by M. Rousseau, what ought to be the first care of the masters? The education of the domestics destined to attend the children. These domestics once instructed, the masters, according to their own experience, and that of their predecessors, may apply themselves in improving the methods of instruction.

These masters, charged with inspiring their pupils with the tastes, the ideas, and passions most conformable to the public interest, will be obliged, when in presence of their pupils, to preserve an attention to their actions, which it is impossible to support for a long time together: if they can bear such constraint for four or five hours in a day, it is the utmost. Therefore it is only in colleges, where the masters successively relieve each other, that use can be made of certain

have, in like manner, an interest to improve it. But to accomplish so troublesome an undertaking, he should have the prospect of a considerable recompence. Few fathers, however, are rich enough to realize such a prospect, and reward his services generously: the prince alone, by honouring the office of an instructor, and attaching handsome appointments to it, can at once inspire men of merit with the desire to deserve and to obtain it.

tain views and certain ideas to be found in the Emilius and Eloisa. What is possible in a house of public instruction, is impossible in the house of a parent.

At what age does the education of children begin? If you believe M. Rousseau, p. 116. vol. v. of Eloisa, *they are all ten or twelve years without judgment*. Till that age therefore all education is useless. Experience, it is true, contradicts M. Rousseau in this matter; it teaches us that a child discerns, at least confusedly, at the very moment it receives perception; that it judges before twelve years of the distances, magnitudes, hardness and softness of bodies; of what pleases or disgusts it; of what is agreeable or disagreeable to its taste; and lastly, that before twelve years it has learned a great part of its native language, and already knows how to express its ideas. Hhence I conclude, that the intention of nature is not, as the author of Emilius says, that the body should be fortified before the mind is exercised, but that the mind should be exercised in proportion as the body is fortified. M. Rousseau does not appear well assured of the truth of his reasonings on this point; for he allows, p. 259. vol. i. of Emilius. "that he frequently contradicts himself; but, says he, "this contradiction is only in the words." I have already shown it in the things; and the author affords me a new proof in the same part of his work, "If I "regard, says he, children as incapable of reasoning*,

* The pretended incapacity of young people for reasoning, says "it

" it is because they are made to reason on what they " do not comprehend." But it is in this matter the same with the adult as the child: they both reason badly on what they do not comprehend. We may even assert, that if the child be equally capable of learning languages as the grown man, he is equally susceptible of attention, and can equally well perceive the resemblances and differences, the agreements and disagreements between different objects, and consequently reason equally justly.

What moreover are the proofs on which M. Rousseau founds his assertion, when he says, p. 203. vol. i. of Emilius, " that if we could bring up a healthful and " robust pupil to ten or twelve years, without his being " able to distinguish his right hand from his left, and " without knowing what a book was, the eye of his " understanding would open at once to the lessons of " reason."

I cannot conceive, I confess, why a child should see the better, because *the eyes of his understanding* have not been opened till he is ten or twelve years old. All that I know is, that the attention of a child delivered up to dissipation till that age, is very difficult to fix; and that the man of science himself, diverted from his studies for too long a time, does not return to them without difficulty. It is with the mind as with the body?

on this subject St. Real, is rather a condescension for the master than the scholar. Those masters who know not how to make them reason, have an interest in saying they are incapable of it.

body: the one is not rendered attentive, nor the other supple, without continual exercise. It is habit alone that makes attention easy.

But we have seen men at a mature age triumph over obstacles that a long inapplication has thrown in the way of the acquisition of talents.

A strong desire of glory can, without doubt, produce wonders. But what a concurrence, what a rare union of circumstances are necessary to produce such a desire. Should we reckon on this concurrence, and expect all from a miracle? The most certain method is to habituate children early to the fatigue of attention. This habit is the most real advantage we now draw from the best studies. But what is to be done to make children attentive? Make it their interest. It is for this reason that recourse is sometimes had to chastisement (16.) Fear engenders attention, and if moreover the methods of instruction be improved, this attention is accompanied with little trouble.

But are these methods easy to be improved?

In an abstract science; for example, such as morality, let the pupil rise from particular ideas, to those that are general; and let clear and determinate ideas be fixed to the words that compose the language of that science; the study of it will then become easy. For what reason do we not, like exact observers of the human mind, dispose our studies in such a manner that experience may be the only, or at least the principal master; and that in every science the pupil may constantly

constantly rise from simple conceptions to the most complex ideas ? This method once adopted, the prograss of the learner would be more rapid, his knowledge more certain, and the study being less painful, would become less disgusting to him, and instruction would consequently have more influence over him.

To repeat incessantly that *childhood and youth are without judgment,* is the language of the old men in a comedy. Youth reflects less than age, because it feels more, and because all objects, being new, then make a stronger impression ; but if the force of the sensations divert the reflection of young people, vivacity engraves the more strongly on their memory those objects that some interest or other will one day make them compare together.

CHAP. VII.

OF THE PRETENDED SUPERIORITY OF MATURE AGE OVER YOUTH.

THE man knows more than the youth ; he has more facts in his memory ; but has he more aptitude to learn, more force of attention, more capacity for reasoning ? No : it is at the commencement of youth, at the age of desires and passions, that our ideas shoot

 forth.

forth, if I may so say, and flourish with the greatest vigour. It is with the spring of life as with the spring of the year. The sap then mounts vigorously in the trees, spreads itself through their branches, is diffused among the twigs, shades them with leaves, adorns them with blossoms, and sets their fruits. It is in the youth of man, in like manner, that those sublime thoughts are set, which are one day to render him renowned.

In the summer of life his ideas ripen: in this season man compares them together, and by uniting them forms one great whole. He passes meanwhile from youth to mature age, and the public, which then reaps the fruit of his labours, regards the gifts of his spring as the pledge of his autumn*. When a man is young, it is then that he is on the whole most perfect (17), that he has most discernment and spirit, and diffuses most of it on all that surrounds him.

If we regard those empires where the soul of the prince becomes that of the nation, and communicates to it life and motion; where like the fountain of Alcinous; whose waters sprang forth from the center of the palace, and distributed themselves by an hundred channels through the capital; we see that the spirit of

* In early youth it is to the desire of glory, sometimes to the love of women, that we owe our most lively taste for study; and in a more advanced age, it is only to the force of habit that we owe the continuance of that taste.

 the

the prince is, in like manner, by the channels of his ministers, transmitted to his subjects. What follows? That in those empires where all proceeds from the monarch, the period of his youth is commonly that when his nation is most flourishing. If fortune, like a coquette, seems to fly from grey hairs, it is because the activity of the passions seems then to abandon the prince (18), and activity is the mother of success.

In proportion as old age approaches, man, less attached to the earth, is less fit to govern. He feels the powers of life each day deserting him. The principle of his activity exhales. The soul of the sovereign grows torpid, and his torpidity communicates itself to his subjects, they lose their firmness and energy: it was in vain that the French expected in the old age of Louis XIV. the laurels that crowned his youth.

To know the power of education over children, look into the fifth volume of Eloisa, and refer to Julia, or M. Rousseau himself. He there says*, "that the "children of Julia, of which the eldest † was six years "old, could then read tolerably well: that they were "already docile ‡; that they were accustomed to de- "nial ||; that Julia had subdued in them the cause of "clamour §; that she had banished from their souls "falsehood, vanity, anger, and envy ¶."

Let Julia, or M. Rousseau regard, if they please,

* Page 159. † Page 148. ‡ Page 120. || Page 132. § Page 135, 136. ¶ Page 123.

 these

these instructions as merely preparatory, the name is nothing to the thing. It is however certain, that at six years there are few whose education is more advanced. What a still more astonishing progress does he ascribe to his pupil, p. 132, vol. ii. of Emilius. "By means of my education, says he, what great ideas "do I find ranged in the head of Emilius? What a "clear judgment! What just reasoning! Superior "man, if he cannot elevate others to his capacity, he "lets himself down to theirs. The true principles of "what is just, the true models of what is beautiful, all "the relations of moral beings, all the ideas of order "are engraved on his mind."

If such be the Emilius of M. Rousseau, nobody will contest with him the rank of a superior man. This pupil, however, p. 302. vol. ii. "had received "from nature, but moderate dispositions to under-"standing."

That superiority therefore, as M. Rousseau maintains, is not in us the effect of the greater or less perfection of our organs, but of our education.

The contradictions of this celebrated writer are not to be wondered at. His observations are almost always just, and his principles almost always false and trite. Hence his errors. Little scrupulous in examining opinions generally received, the number of those which he adopts impose on him: and what philosopher always regards his opinions with the severe eye of scrupulosity! The greatest part of mankind repeat

repeat them after each other. They are like travellers, who successively give the same description of countries through which they have passed rapidly, or even which they have never seen.

In the ancient theatres there were, we are told, a great number of artificial echoes, placed at different distances, and but few actors on the stage. In like manner on the theatre of the world, the number of those that think for themselves is very small, and the number of echoes very great. We are every where stunned with their noise. I do not apply this comparison to M. Rousseau; but I shall observe, that as there is no genius into whose compositions there does not enter a great deal of hearsay, so it is one of these hearsays that without doubt made M. Rousseau believe, "that children, before the age of ten or twelve "years, are entirely incapable of reasoning and in-"struction."

CHAP. VIII.

OF THE ENCOMIUMS PAID BY M. ROUSSEAU TO IGNORANCE.

He who shall chance to regard the diversity of understandings and characters, as the effect of the di-

versity of temperaments†, and who shall persuade himself *that education adds but trifling qualities to the great ones which we receive from nature*, will, in consequence, believe education to be prejudical (19) and will also sometimes become the apologist of ignorance. Thus M. Rousseau, p. 163. vol. iii. of Eloisa, says, "that it is not from books children ought to "draw their knowledge: knowledge, he adds, is not "to be found there." But without books would the sciences and arts have ever attained a certain degree of perfection? Why should we not learn geometry, from Euclid and Clairaut: medicine from Hippocrates and Boerhaave; the art of war from Cæsar, Feuquiere, and Montecuculi; the civil law from Domat; and to conclude, politics and morality from the historians; such as Tacitus, Hume, Polybius and Machiavel? Why does M. Rousseau, not content with despising letters, seem to insinuate that man, virtuous by nature, owes his vices to his knowledge? "It is of "little concern to me, says Julia, p. 158. vol. v. ibid. "whether my son be learned: I am content that he

* If characters were produced by organisation, there would be in every country a certain number of men of a remarkable character. Why do we commonly meet with them only in free countries? Because, it will be said, it is in those countries only that characters can display themselves. But can morality oppose the developement of a corporeal cause? Is there any moral maxim that can humanise a wolf?

"be

" be wise and good." But do the sciences render a " citizen vicious? Is the ignorant man better (20) and wiser than all others?

If the sort of probity necessary to prevent a man from being hanged requires little learning, is it the same with a refined and delicate probity? What a knowledge of patriotic duties does not such a probity suppose?

Among the stupid I have seen some good men, though but few in number. I have seen many oysters, but few that contained pearls. It has not been observed, that the most ignorant of mankind are the most happy, the most humane and virtuous (21).

In North America an inhuman war arms the ignorant savages perpetually against each other. These savages, cruel in their combats, are still more so in their triumphs. In what manner do they treat their prisoners? With death in the midst of the most horrid torments. Has peace, with the calumet in her hand, suspended the fury of this savage people? What outrages do they not frequently commit in their own settlements? How often have we seen murder, cruelty, and treachery, encouraged by impunity (22) walk boldly forth among them!

For what reason, in fact, should the wild man of the forest be more virtuous than the enlightened man of the city? Men are every where born with the same wants, and the same desire of gratifying those wants. They

are

are the same in the cradle, and if they differ among themselves, it is when they are further advanced in the career of life.

The wants of a savage people, it will be said, are reducible to such as are merely corporeal, and are few in number. Those of a polished nation on the contrary are immense. Few men are there exposed to the severity of hunger: yet how many desires and appetites have they to gratify? and what disputes, quarrels, and vices arise from that multiplicity of appetites! Yes; but what laws and policy have they also to suppress them!

Besides, great crimes are not always the effects of the multitude of our desires. It is not the number, but the strength of the passions by which many crimes are produced. The more desires and appetites I have, the less ardent they are. The torrents that divide themselves into many branches are the least dangerous in their course. A strong passion is a solitary passion, that concentrates all our desires into one point. Such are frequently the passions produced in us by corporeal wants.

When two nations without arts and agriculture are sometimes exposed to the torment of famine, with what a principle of activity are they animated. There is no fishy lake, no forest of game, that does not become the cause of disputes, quarrels, and battles between them. If the fish and the game begin to fail, each one defends the lake or the forest as his peculiar property,

property, as the husbandman defends the entrance to the field that is ready for the mower.

Hunger returns many times a day, and for that reason becomes a more active principle in the savage, than the variety of tastes and desires among a polished people. Now the activity of the savage is always cruel, because it is not restrained by any law. For this reason there are more cruelty and crimes committed in North America, in proportion to the number of inhabitants, than in all Europe. On what then can the opinion of the virtue and goodness of savages be founded?

Does the depopulation of the northern countries, so often ravaged by famine, prove that the Samoiedes are happier than the Hollanders? Since the invention of fire arms, and the progress of the military art (23) how wretched is the state of the Eskimaux! To what does he owe his existence? To the compassion of the European nations. If there should arise any dispute between them and the savages, the latter would be destroyed. Can they be a happy people whose existence depends on such a contingency?

If the Huron and Iroquois were as ignorant as M. Rousseau could desire, I should not think them the more happy. It is to their learning and the wisdom of their legislation that a people owe their virtue, their prosperity, their population, and their power. At what time did the Russians become formidable to Europe? When the czar forced them to acquire knowledge (24). M. Rousseau, vol. iii. p. 30. of Emilius,

"is

"is absolutely of opinion, that the arts and sciences, "philosophy, and the habits which it produces, will "soon change Europe into a desert (25), and in short "that learning corrupts morality." But on what does he found this opinion? To maintain this paradox with sincerity, he must have never considered the empires of Turkey, Ispahan, Delhi, and Morocco, or, in short, any of those countries where ignorance is equally adored in the mosque and in the palace.

What do we behold on the Ottoman throne? A sovereign whose vast empire is nothing more than an immense desert: the whole of whose riches and subjects being assembled, as it were, in an enormous capital, presents nothing more than a vain phantom of power, and who at this time, unable to resist the attack of a single Christian monarch, would split upon the rock of Malta, and perhaps no longer make any figure in Europe.

What does Persia present? Inhabitants scattered through vast regions infested by robbers, and twenty tyrants, who dispute, sword in hand, about cities in ashes, and countries that are laid waste.

What do we see in India, that country the most favoured by nature? A slothful people, debased by slavery, and who without love of the public welfare, without any elevation of soul, without discipline, and without courage, vegetate under the finest climate of the earth (26); a people, in short, whose whole power cannot sustain the attack of a handful of Europeans. Such

is

is in a great part of the East the state of nations subject to this vaunted ignorance.

Can M. Rousseau really believe, that the empires I have just mentioned are better inhabited than France, Germany, Italy, Holland, &c. Can he think the ignorant inhabitants of these countries more virtuous and happy than the free and learned nation of England? No, certainly. He cannot be ignorant of facts known to the most superficial *petit maitre*, and the most silly gossip. What then could induce M. Rousseau so boldly to plead the cause of ignorance?

CHAP. IX.

WHAT MOTIVES COULD INDUCE M. ROUSSEAU TO BECOME THE APOLOGIST OF IGNORANCE.

It is for M. Rousseau himself to inform us in this matter. "There is not, he says, p. 30. vol. iii. of Emilius, any philosopher who has acquired a knowledge "of the true and the false, that does not prefer the "falsehood he has discovered, to the truth that has "been discovered by another. Where is the philoso-"pher, he adds, that to promote his own reputation, "would not willingly deceive the whole human race?"

Is

Rousseau's motives for praising ignorance.

Is M. Rousseau that philosopher? I will (27) not think it. Besides if he thinks an ingenious falsehood can ever immortalize the name of its inventor, he deceives himself*; truth alone can have a durable success. The laurels with which error is sometimes crowned have but the verdure of a day.

When a base soul, a mind too weak to discover the truth, knowingly asserts a falsehood, it obeys its instinct; but that a philosopher can become the apostle of an error that he does not take for the truth†, I doubt, and my reason is unanswerable; it is the desire which every author has of public esteem and glory. M. Rousseau has doubtless sought it, but it was as an orator, not as a philosopher. So that of all celebrated men he is the only one who has set himself up against science. (28) Does he despise it? Is he void of pride? No: but that pride was blind at a certain time‡.

Doubtless when he became the apologist of ignorance he said to himself, "Mankind in general are "idle, and consequently enemies to all study that de-"mands attention. Mankind in general are vain, and

* I except, however, religious falsehoods.

† Man does not, I know, love truth for itself. He refers all to his happiness. But if he places it in a public and durable esteem, it is evident, as that esteem is attached to the discovery of the truth, that he is naturally led to the love and search of the truth. A renown acquired by error, is a phantom of glory, that is driven away by the first rays of truth and reason.

‡ See Vol. I. p. 34.

"consequently

" consequently enemies to every superior understand-
" ing. Lastly, the common people have a secret ha-
" tred for learned men and the sciences. If I can
" persuade them of their inutility, I shall flatter the
" vanity of the stupid; and render myself agreeable
" to the ignorant; I shall be their master; they my
" disciples, and my name, consecrated by their eulo-
" gies, will be renowned throughout the universe.
" The monk himself will declare for me (29). The ig-
" norant and credulous are the dupes of the monks:
" it is the public stupidity that constitutes his gran-
" deur. Besides what period can be more favourable
" to my project? In France all concurs to depreciate
" talents. If I make a good use of the opportunity,
" my works will become renowned."

But can this renown be durable? Could the author of Emilius promise himself it should? He must know that there is a secret incessant revolution operating in the minds and characters of a people, and that ignorance will at last disgrace itself.

Now what a punishment is it to this author, if he already perceive that future contempt into which his panegyrics on ignorance will fall? (40) By what means can Europe be for a long time deceived in this matter? Experience teaches the people that genius and learning are the true sources of their power, prosperity, and virtue; that on the contrary their weakness and unhappiness is constantly the effect of a vice in their government, and consequently of some ignorance in the

the legislature. Men will therefore never think knowledge and the sciences really detrimental.

But men have sometimes seen, I confess, in the same century, the arts and sciences improved, and the manners corrupted, and I know with what address ignorance, ever envious, takes advantage of these facts, imputing to the sciences a corruption of manners totally dependent on another cause.

CHAP. X.

OF THE CAUSES OF THE DECLINE OF AN EMPIRE.

THE introduction and improvement of the arts and sciences in an empire do not occasion its decline ; but the same causes that accelerate the progress of the sciences, sometimes produce the most fatal effects.

There are nations in which from a peculiar series of circumstances, the seeds of the arts and sciences do not spring up till the moment the manners begin to be corrupted.

A certain number of men assemble to form a society. These men found a city : their neighbours see it rise up,

up, with a jealous eye. The inhabitants of that city, forced to be at once labourers and soldiers, make use by turns of the spade and the sword. What in such a country is the necessary science and virtue? The military art and valour; they alone are there respected. Every other science and virtue is there unknown. Such was the state of rising Rome, when weak and surrounded by warlike nations, she with difficulty sustained their attacks. Her glory and power extended over the whole earth; she acquired however the one and the other but slowly: ages of triumphs were necessary to subject her neighbours. Now when the surrounding nations were subdued, there arose, from the form of her government, civil dissensions, which were succeeded by wars with foreigners; so that it cannot be imagined, while the citizens were engaged in the different employments of magistrates and soldiers, and incessantly agitated with strong hopes and fears, they could enjoy the leisure and tranquillity necessary to the study of the sciences.

In every country where these events succeed each other in a regular series, the only period favourable to letters is, unfortunately, that when the civil wars, the troubles and factions being extinguished, liberty is expiring, as in the time of Augustus, under the strokes of despotism*. Now this period precedes, but a short

* It was so in France, when cardinal Richelieu disarmed the people and the nobles, and brought them into subjection. It was then that the arts and sciences flourished there.

time, the decline of an empire. The arts and sciences however then flourish ; and that for two reasons.

The first is the force of men's passions. In the first moments of slavery, their minds, still agitated by the remembrance of their lost liberty, are like the sea after a tempest. The citizen still burns with a desire to render himself illustrious ; but his situation is altered. He cannot have his bust placed by that of Timoleon, Pelopidas, or Brutus. He cannot deliver his name down to posterity as the destroyer of tyrants, and the avenger of liberty. His statue may however be placed by those of Homer, Epicurus, or Archimedes. This he knows, and therefore if there be but one sort of glory to which he can aspire, if it be with the laurels of the Muses alone that he can be crowned, it is in the career of the arts and sciences that he prepares to seek them, and it is then that illustrious men of every literary profession arise.

The second of these causes is the interest which sovereigns then have to encourage the progress of the sciences. At the moment that despotism is established what does the monarch desire ? To inspire his subjects with a love of the arts and sciences. What does he fear ? That they should reflect on their fetters, blush at their servitude, and again turn their looks toward liberty. He would therefore by employing their minds make them forget their base condition. He consequently presents them with new objects of glory. As an hypocritical patron of the arts and sciences, he shows

shows the more regard to the man of genius the more he feels the want of his eulogies.

The manners of a nation do not change the moment despotism is established. The spirit of the people is free some time after their hands are tied. During these first moments illustrious men still preserve some consideration. The tyrant therefore loads them with favours, that they may load him with praises, and men of great talents are too often seduced to become the panegyrists of usurpation and tyranny.

What motives can induce them to it? Sometimes meanness, and frequently gratitude*. It must be confessed, that every great revolution in an empire supposes great talents in him by whom it is produced, or at least some brilliant vice, that astonishment and gratitude metamorphose into virtue (31).

Such is, at the time of the establishment of despotism, the productive cause of great performances in the arts and sciences. The first moments past, if the same country become barren in men of talents (32), it is because the tyrant being then well established on his throne is no longer in want of their assistance. So that the reign of the arts and sciences in a state seldom

* Men of letters are to be reproached with having praised in Cardinal Richelieu, the worst of citizens, and the promoter of tyranny: the man who sowed the seeds of the present evils of the French nation; the man, in short, who ought to be held in equal horror by the prince and the people.

extends beyond a century or two. The aloe is an emblem of the production of the sciences in every state: a hundred years are necessary to strengthen its root and make it put forth its branches, it then shoots up, flowers, and dies.

If in each empire the sciences just shoot up and then decline, it is because the motives proper to produce men of genius, do not commonly exert themselves there more than once. It is at the highest period of grandeur, that a nation commonly produces the fruits of the arts and sciences. While three or four generations of illustrious men pass away, the people change their manners, and sink into servitude; their minds have lost their energy; no strong passion remains to put them in action. The tyrant no longer excites the people to the pursuit of any kind of glory. It is not talents, but baseness, which he now honours: and genius, if it still remain, lives and dies unknown in its own country: it is like the orange-tree, that flourishes, perfumes the air, and dies in a desert.

Despotism, while it is gaining ground, suffers men to say what they will, while they suffer it to do what it will: but once established, it forbids all talking, writing, or thinking. The minds of men then sink into apathy: all the people become slaves, curse the breast that gave them milk, and under such a government, every new birth is an increase of misery.

Genius, there chained, drags its irons heavily along; it does not fly, it creeps. The sciences are neglected; ignorance is honoured (33), and every man of discernment.

cernment declared an enemy to the state. In the kingdom of the blind, who is the most odious? He that can see clearly. If the blind seize him, his destruction is certain. Now, in the empire of ignorance, the same fate attends the enlightened. The press is there the more restrained, as the views of the minister are more confined. Under the reign of a Frederick, or an Antoninus, we may say, what we will, think and write what we will: under other reigns we must be silent.

The understanding of the prince is always manifested by the esteem and consideration which he bestows on talents*. The favour he shows them, far from injuring, benefits the state.

The arts and sciences are the glory of a nation, and increase its prosperity. It is, therefore, to despotism alone, which is interested at first in protecting them, and not to the sciences themselves, that we should attribute the decline of an empire. When the sovereign of a mighty nation has put on the crown of arbitrary power, the people become daily more enfeebled.

The pomp of an Eastern empire, can without doubt impose on the vulgar, who may estimate the force of

* There are three things, said Mathias, king of Hungary, that a prince ought to propose to himself:

The first, is, to be just.

The second to conquer his enemies.

The third, to encourage letters, and honour illustrious men.

the nation by the magnificence of its palaces. The wise man judges differently; it is by this very magnificence, that he estimates its weakness. He sees nothing in the imposing pomp, in the midst of which the tyrant sits enthroned, but a sumptuous and mournful decoration of the dead: but the apparatus of an ostentatious funeral, in the center of which is a cold and lifeless body, a lump of inanimate earth: in short, a phantom of power, ready to disappear before the enemy by whom it is despised. A great nation, where despotic power is at last established, resembles an oak that has flourished for ages. Its majestic trunk, and the magnitude of its branches, still declare its pristine strength and grandeur; it seems still to be the monarch of the woods, but its real state is that of decline; its branches despoiled of their leaves, and destitute of the spirit of life, are half-withered, and some of them continually broken off by the wind. Such is the state of a nation subdued by arbitrary power.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

THE CULTIVATION OF THE ARTS AND SCIENCES, IN A DESPOTIC EMPIRE, RETARDS ITS RUIN

IT is at the time that despotism, being completely established, has reduced the people, as I have said, to slavery: it is then, that by stifling in them all love of glory, and by diffusing every where the darkness of ignorance, the empire is precipitated into ruin (34). However, if, as M. Saurin observes, the study of the sciences, and the urbanity of manners which they inspire, for some time abate the violence of arbitrary power, the sciences then, so far from promoting, retard the decline of the state.

The bulwark of the sciences, it is true, cannot for a long time hold out against a power to which all must yield; which overturns the best established thrones, and the most powerful empires: the corruption of manners, however, cannot at least be imputed to the sciences; they do not engender public calamities, which in each state, are proportioned to the increase of arbitrary power. How, in fact, can the arts and sciences corrupt morals (35), and enervate courage? What is science? A collection of observations; if it

be in mechanics, on the manner of employing moving powers; if it be geometry, on the relation of magnitudes to each other: if it be surgery, on the art of curing wounds; if it be legislation, on the means proper to render men virtuous and happy. Now, why should these different collections of observations enervate courage? It was the science of discipline, that brought the universe into subjection to the Romans. It was therefore, in quality of men of science, that they subdued all nations. So that when, to gain the affection of the soldiery, the tyrants were obliged to relax the severity of military discipline; when, in short, that science was almost entirely lost among them, it was then, that being vanquished in their turn, the conquerors of the world submitted, in consequence of their ignorance, to bear the yoke of the northern nations.

Well tempered helmets, cuirasses and swords were forged, at Sparta. This art implies an infinity of others*, and yet the Spartans were not less valiant.

* The arts of luxury, it is said, enervate courageous men. But what is it that opposes the entrance of luxury into a state? Is it ignorance? No: it is poverty, or the nearly equal distribution of the national wealth. What citizens of Sparta could have purchased an enamelled snuff box? The whole public treasure would not have paid for it. No jeweller, therefore, set up his trade at Lacedæmon; he would have died of hunger. It is not the fabricator of luxury, that comes to corrupt the manners of a people, but the corruption of a people that invites the fabricator of lux-

Cæsar,

Cæsar, Cassius, and Brutus, were learned, eloquent, and brave. The body and the mind were both exercised at the same time, in Greece. Luxury is the daughter of riches, and not of the sciences. When Homer composed the Iliad, his contemporaries were the engravers of the buckler of Achilles. The arts had, therefore, then attained in Greece, a certain degree of perfection, and yet they still exercised themselves in the combats of the cestus, and wrestling.

It is not the sciences that in France render the greatest part of the officers incapable of the fatigues of war, but the effeminacy of their education. If a commission were denied to every one, who could not march certain distances, lift certain weights, and undergo certain fatigues, the desire of obtaining military employments would wean the French from their effeminacy; their manners, and their education would be

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ury: in every sort of commerce, it is the demand that precedes the offer.

Besides if luxury be, as I have said, the effect of the too unequal distribution of the national wealth, it is evident, that the sciences, having no share in this unequal partition, cannot be regarded as the cause of luxury. Learned men have little wealth. It is with the men of business, and not with them we see the splendor of magnificence. If the arts of luxury have sometimes flourished in a nation at the same period with letters, it is, because the epoch when the sciences have been cultivated, has sometimes coincided with that, when the wealth of the nation was accumulated in a few hands.

changed,

changed, they would become men. It is ignorance, that produces the imperfection of the laws, and their imperfection, the vices of the people. Knowledge causes the contrary effect. No one has, therefore, ever reckoned among the corruptors of morals, Lycurgus, that sage, who travelled through all countries, to find, in the conversation of philosophers, the knowledge which a just reformation of the laws of his country required.

But, it will be said, it was even from the acquisition of this information, that he drew his contempt for them. Yet, who will ever believe that a legislator, who took such pains, to collect the works of Homer, and who erected a statue to Laughter, in the public place, really despised the sciences? The Spartans, as well as the Athenians, were the most learned and illustrious people of Greece. What sort of a figure did the ignorant Thebans make, till Epaminondas drew them from their stupidity?

I have shown, in this section, the errors and contradictions of those, whose principles differ from mine.

I have proved, that every panegyrist of ignorance, is, at least unknown to himself, an enemy to the public good;

That it is in the heart of man, the science of morality should be studied;

That every ignorant people, though rich and civilized, are constantly a people without morals.

It is now proper to enlarge on the evils into which ignorance

ignorance plunges a nation : the importance of a good education will then more fully appear ; I shall excite a greater desire to improve it, and I shall, by anticipation, interest my fellow-citizens in the ideas, that I ought to propose to them, on this subject.

NOTES

NOTES ON SECTION V.

NOTES.

1. (page 4.) M. ROUSSEAU, p. 4, vol. ii. of Emilius, after having said a few words on the origin of the passions, adds, "On this principle, it is easy to see how we may direct all the "passions of children and men, either to good or evil. But if it "be possible to direct the passions of children to good or evil, it "is then possible to change their characters."

2. (ibid.) "The interior voice of virtue, says M. Rousseau, "cannot make itself heard by the poor." Among the poor, this author apparently ranks unbelievers, when he adds, p. 207, vol. iii. of Emilius, "An unbeliever would have all the world misera-"ble, to spare himself the least pain, or procure himself the least "pleasure." M. Rousseau is an unbeliever, yet I do not accuse him of forming such a wish. M. Voltaire is no bigot, yet it was he who took in hand the defence of the innocent family of Calas; it was he who opened his purse, and sacrificed his time, always so precious to him, in solicitations, and who alone protected the oppressed widow and orphans, when they were abandoned by the clergy and the magistrates. Does M. Rousseau mean any thing more than that the infidel loves himself better than other people? Now this affection is common to the faithful, as well as the unbeliever. There is no saint that would damn himself for his neighbour. When St. Paul wished to be anathematized for his brethren, did he not exaggerate the dignity of that sentiment, and must he not have resided a fortnight in the infernal regions, before he could be sure he was sincere?

NOTES ON SECTION V.

3. (p. 5.) " As long as a man's sensibility (Emilius, p. 4, vol. ii.) " is confined to himself, there is no morality in his actions. It is " only when he begins to extend his sensibility to others, that he " first conceives those sentiments, and afterwards, those notions " of good and evil, that make him a real man." This passage proves the ingenuity with which M. Rousseau refutes himself.

4. (p. 8.) To judge, says M. Rousseau, is not to feel. The proof of his opinion, is, " that there is in us a faculty or power, " that makes us compare objects. Now, says he, this power can- " not be the effect of corporeal sensibility." If M. Rousseau had examined this matter more profoundly, he would have seen that this power was nothing more than the interest we have in comparing objects with each other, and that this interest takes its source from self-love, the immediate effect of corporeal sensibility.

5. (p. 9.) The imagination of the people of the North is not less vigorous than those of the South. Compare the poems of Ossian with those of Homer. In reading those of Milton, Fingal, the Erse poets, &c. we see no less force in the pictures of the northern poets, than in those of the south. So the sublime translator of the poems of Ossian, after having proved in an excellent dissertation, that the great and masculine beauties of poetry belong to all people, observes, that compositions of this kind suppose a nation to be polished only to a certain degree. It is not, says he, the climate, but the manners of the age, that give a strong and sublime character to poetry. That of Ossian is a proof.

6. (p. 11.) If man be sometimes wicked, it is when he has an interest to be so; when the laws, that by a fear of punishment, or a hope of reward, should have directed him to virtue, lead him on the contrary to vice. Such is man in a despotic country, that is, in a land of flattery and baseness, bigotry, sloth, hypocrisy, falsehood, treason, &c.

7. (p. 15.) It is not a sense of the beauty of morality that makes a workman labour, but the promise of a shilling to drink. Suppose

NOTES ON SECTION V.

Suppose a man to be infirm, and to depend on the assiduity of his domestics for the prolongation of his life, what must he do to secure a continuance of their care? Preach the beauty of morality? No: but tell them, that having made his will, he will reward their zeal while he lives, by giving them every year a handsome and increasing gratuity. If he keep his word, he will be as well attended, as he would have been badly, had he only reminded them of the beauty of morality.

There are no subjects on which we might not give similar instructions, which, drawn from the principle of personal interest, would be far more efficacious, than those extracted from the metaphysical theology, or from the metaphysics of the Shaftesburyans.

8. (p. 16.) We crush without pity a fly, a spider, or another insect, and yet cannot see an ox killed without pain. Why? Because, in a large animal, the effusion of blood, and the convulsions of his sufferings bring to our minds a sensation of pain, that we do not feel on killing an insect.

9. (p. 17.) When two nations have an interest to unite, they make a treaty of reciprocal friendship and humanity. When one of these nations no longer finds its account in the treaty, that nation breaks it: such is man. Interest determines his love or hatred. Humanity is not essential to his nature. What indeed do we understand by the word essential? That, without which a thing cannot exist. Now, in this sense corporeal sensibility is the only essential quality in men.

10. (p. 18.) We tremble at the sight of the assassin on the wheel. Why? Because his punishment recals to our minds the pain and death to which nature has subjected us. But why are executioners and surgeons obdurate? Because, habituated to the torture of a malefactor, or a patient, without feeling any pain themselves, they become insensible to his cries. When we do not perceive in the sufferings of others, such as we are liable to ourselves, we become obdurate.

11. (ibid.) The desire of being commiserated in our misfortunes,

NOTES ON SECTION V.

tunes, and aided in our enterprizes; the desire of fortune, conversation, pleasure, &c. produces in us all the sentiment of friendship. It is not, therefore, always founded on virtue; consequently, the bad as well as the good are susceptible of friendship, but not of humanity. The good alone feel the sentiment of a refined compassion and sensibility, which uniting man to man, renders him the friend of all his fellow-citizens. This sentiment is felt by the virtuous alone.

12. (p. 19.) How many cruel edicts contradict the pretended natural goodness of man!

13. (ibid.) We see children enclose chaffers and horn-beetles in hot wax, then dress them up like soldiers, and thus prolong their misery for two or three months. It is in vain to say, that these children do not reflect on the pain those insects feel. If the sentiment of compassion was as natural to them as that of fear, they would be sensible of the sufferings of an insect in the same manner as fear makes them sensible of danger from a ferocious animal.

14. (p. 22.) The despotism of China, is we are told very moderate, of which the abundance of their harvests is a proof. In China, as well as every where else, we know, that to make the earth fertile, it is not enough to compose good books of agriculture, but that there be no law which opposes cultivation. Therefore, the taxes in China, says M. Poivre, do not amount, on indifferent lands, to more than one thirtieth of the produce. The Chinese, therefore, enjoy their property almost entire. Their government, consequently, in this respect is good. But is it so with regard to the property of their persons? The habitual and enormous distribution they make of the strokes of the bamboo, proves the contrary. It is their arbitrary punishments, that doubtless debase their souls, and make, of almost all the Chinese, a knavish merchant, a cowardly soldier, and a citizen without honour.

15. (p. 23.) M. Montesquieu compares the despotism of the East to a tree which the savage cuts down that he may gather its fruit. A simple fact will give, perhaps, a still more horrible idea of despotism.

The

NOTES ON SECTION V.

The English, were besieged in Fort William, by the troops of the Suba, or Vice-Roy of Bengal, and made prisoners. They were in number 146, shut up in the Black Hole at Calcutta, which was only 18 feet square. These wretches, in one of the hottest climates in the world, and in the hottest season of that climate, received no air but by a window that was partly blocked up by the largeness of the bars. They had scarcely entered, when they were bathed in sweat, and tortured by thirst. Panting for breath, they sent forth lamentable cries, and begged to be put in a larger prison, but in vain. They endeavoured to set the air in motion by their hats, but the resource was ineffectual. Their senses forsook them, the greatest part fell to the earth, and died. The survivors drank the sweat of their companions; again cried for air, and to be put into two dungeons. For this purpose they addressed themselves to a jemmandaar, one of the guards of the prison; whose heart was open to compassion and avarice. He consented for a large sum to inform the Suba of their situation. At his return, those who were yet alive, cried out, from amidst the dead bodies for fresh air, and to be released from the dungeon. "Wretches, said the guard, you must all die, for the Suba "sleeps, and what slave dares to wake him?" Such is despotism.

16. (p. 34.) M. Rousseau would not have children chastised. But he owns, that to make them attentive, they must have an interest to be so. Now, before they have attained the age of emulation, there are but two methods of exciting that interest in them. One is the hope of obtaining a play-thing (amusement and gluttony are the only passions of infancy); the other is the fear of punishment. When the first method is found sufficient, it deserves the preference. When it is not, recourse must be had to chastisement. Fear is always employed efficaciously. A child has even more fear of pain, than he has love for a toy. When chastisement is severe and properly inflicted, there is seldom occasion for its being repeated. But it is clouding the dawn of life with images of trouble. No: that trouble is short as the punishment.

NOTES ON SECTION V.

ment. The moment after, the child jumps and plays with his companions, and if he remember the rod, it is in those calm moments that are consecrated to study, when the remembrance strengthens his application.

Let the methods of teaching, moreover, still too imperfect, be improved, and simplified ; learning will become more easy, and the pupil less exposed to chastisement. A child would learn Italian, or German, with the same facility as his native tongue, if by being continually surrounded by Italians or Germans, he could not ask for what he would have, but in those languages.

17. (p. 36.) With age, we gain knowledge and experience, but we lose activity and firmness. Now, in the administration of affairs, civil and military, which of these qualities is most necessary ? The latter. Men are always raised too late, says Machiavel, to important places. Almost all the great actions of the present and past ages, have been performed before the age of 30 years ; of which Hannibal, Alexander, &c. are proofs. The man who renders himself illustrious, says Philip de Commines, is always so early. It is not at the period, when enfeebled by age, insensible to the charms of praise, and indifferent to consideration, which is the companion of glory, that men make the efforts necessary to attain it.

18. (p. 37.) In all romances, it is constantly before their marriage that the heroes combat monsters, giants, and enchanters. A clear and secret sensation tells the writer, that the desire of his hero being once gratified, he has no longer in him the principle of action : and in consequence he informs us, that after marriage, the prince and princess lived happy, but in peace.

19. (p. 40.) Instruction, always useful, makes us what we are. Learned writers are our instructors ; our contempt for books is not, therefore, sincere. Without books we should still be what the savage is.

Why have not the women of the seraglio the understanding of the women of Paris ? Because it is with ideas as with languages.

NOTES ON SECTION V.

We speak that of those who surround us. An Eastern slave has no idea of the boldness of the ancient Romans. He has not read Livy; has no conceptions of liberty, nor of a republican government. All in us is education and acquisition.

20. (p. 41.) The knowledge and mistrust of mankind, are, they say, inseparable. Man then is not so good as Julia pretends.

21. (ibid.) The less knowledge we have, the more self-interested we become. I hear a *petite maitresse* send forth a horrible cry: what is the matter? Is it for the bad choice of a general, or for the registering an edict oppressive to the people? No: it is for the death of her cat, or her bird. The more ignorant we are, the less we perceive the relation between the national interest and our own.

22. (ibid.) Among certain savages drunkenness attracts respect. Whoever says he is drunk, is declared a prophet, and, like those of the Jews, may commit murder with impunity.

23. (p. 43.) When a people are happy, what must they do to continue so? Take care that the neighbouring nations do not bring them into subjection; for which purpose they should exercise themselves in arms, be well governed, have able generals, and admirals; wise administrators of the finances, in a word, an excellent legislation. It is not therefore always with sincerity, that men become the apologists of ignorance. M. Rousseau well knows, that to the imbecility of the Sultans, almost all the evils of despotism are to be referred.

24. (ibid.) Some officers, in France adopt the opinion of M. Rousseau; they would have the soldiers automata. Turenne and Condé, however, never complained that theirs had too much understanding. The Greek and Roman soldiers, who on their return from the campaign, became citizens, were necessarily better instructed, more intelligent, than the soldiers of our days, and yet the Greek and Roman armies were at least as good as our's. Does not the solicitude of the present generals to stifle all knowledge in the

NOTES ON SECTION V.

the subalterns, declare a fear of the too discerning censures of their operations? Scipio and Cæsar had less diffidence.

25. (p. 44.) Of all parts of Asia, China is the most learned, as well as the best cultivated, and most populous. Some men of letters contend that Europe, when ignorant and barbarous, was more populous than at present. My answer to their numerous citations, is, that ten acres of wheat will nourish more men than a hundred acres of heath, pasturage, &c. that Europe was formerly covered with vast forests, and that the Germans lived on the produce of their cattle. This Cæsar and Tacitus affirm, and their testimony decides the question. A nation of herdsmen cannot be numerous. Civilized Europe is, therefore, necessarily more populous, than it was when barbarous and savage. It is a folly to refer on this subject to historians, who are often untrue or ill-informed, when we have before us evident proofs of their falsehood. A country cannot support a great number of people without agriculture, unless it be by a miracle; and miracles are much more rare than falsehoods.

26. (ibid.) The Indians have no strength of character. They have no spirit, but that of commerce. It is true, that in this respect nature has done every thing for them, and enriched their soil with those precious commodities which Europe seeks to purchase. The Indians are consequently rich and idle. They love money, but have not the courage to defend it. Their ignorance of the military art, and of the science of government, will keep them a long time mean and despicable.

27. (p. 46.) There is no proposition, moral or political, that M. Rousseau does not adopt and reject by turns. So many contradictions have made his sincerity sometimes suspected. He assures us, for example, vol. iii. p. 132 of Emilius, "that it is to Christianity, "that modern governments owe their solid authority; and their less "frequent revolutions; and that Christianity has rendered princes "less sanguinary, he says is a truth, proved by facts." In his Social Contract, chap. viii. he says, "that at least Paganism did "not enkindle religious wars; that Jesus, by establishing a spi-

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NOTES ON SECTION V.

"ritual kingdom on earth, has separated the theological system "from the political: that such divisions have arisen from thence, as "have never ceased to agitate the Christian people; that the "pretended kingdom of the other world has become, under a visi- "ble chief, the most violent despotism in this; that from the "double power spiritual and temporal, has resulted a conflict "of jurisdiction, which renders all good policy impossible in po- "pish states; that we can never know whether we should obey "the priest or the magistrate: that the Christian law is detrimental "to the strong constitution of the state: that Christianity is so "evidently bad, that it is losing time to amuse ourselves with prov- "ing it to be so."

Now, in two works given to the public almost at the same time, how can we imagine that the same man could be so contrary to himself, and that he could seriously maintain two such contrary propositions?

28. (p. 46.) In consequence of M. Rousseau's hatred for the ciences, I have seen the priests flatter themselves with his approaching conversion. Why, say they, should we despair of him? He protects ignorance and hates philosophers: he cannot endure a sound reasoner. *If John James was a saint, what could he do more?*

29. (p. 47.) All bigots are enemies to science. Under Louis XIV. they gave the name of Jansenists to those learned men whom they would damn. They have since substituted the name of Encyclopedists. That name, however, has not now in France any determinate meaning. It is an appellation that is presumed to be reproachful, and which dunces make use of to defame any one, that has more sense than themselves.

30. (ibid.) Despotism, that cruel scourge of humanity, is most commonly the production of national stupidity. Every people are free at first. To what cause must we attribute the loss of liberty? To their ignorance and foolish confidence in ambitious men. Ambition and the people, are the girl and the lion in the fable; when she

she had persuaded the animal to let her cut his claws, and file his teeth, she delivered him up to the mastiffs.

31. (p. 51.) The literati, as well as the courtiers, are men; and have, therefore, often flattered the injustice of power: there is, however, one remarkable difference between them; men of letters have been always protected by princes of merit, they have only exaggerated their patrons' virtues. They praised Augustus too much. But the courtiers praised both Nero and Caracalla.

32. (ibid.) When merit no longer leads to honours, it is despised; and to compare small things with great, it is with an empire, as with a college. When the prizes and principal places are for favourites, there is no longer any emulation among the pupils. All study is neglected. In like manner, when favour alone disposes of the preferments in an empire, it becomes destitute of energy: great men are no longer seen.

33. (p. 52.) In the East, the best titles to a great fortune are baseness and ignorance. When an important place becomes vacant, the tyrant enters his anti-chamber: Have not I here, he says, some valet, of whom I can make a vizir? All the slaves prostrate themselves before him; the most despicable obtains the place. Can it then be wondered at, that the conduct of the vizir corresponds with the manner in which he is chosen?

34. (p. 55.) Neither the Romans nor the French had yet lost their courage in the days of Augustus and Louis XIV.

35. (ibid.) M. Rousseau, the too frequent panegyrist of ignorance, says, in some part of his works: "Not the least of the benefactions of nature is that of preserving men from science, and "from the labour of instructing themselves." But replies a M. Gautier, might we not say, with equal propriety, "Nations, "know that nature would not have you nourish yourselves with "corn. The trouble requisite to till the earth, declares that you "ought to leave it uncultivated." This reply was not to the taste of M. Rousseau, and in a letter written to M. Grimm, he says, "This M. Gautier did not reflect, that with a little labour

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NOTES ON SECTION V.

" we are sure to make bread ? But after a great deal of study, it is " doubtful, whether we can make a reasonable man." I am not, in my turn, fully satisfied with this answer of M. Rousseau's. Is it certain, in the first place, that, in an unknown island, we can so easily make bread ? Before we reap the corn, we must sow it, and before sowing the seed, we must drain the ground, cut down the trees, and cultivate the earth ; and this cultivation is not to be performed without labour.

Even in those countries where the land is best cultivated, how much of the husbandman's care is requisite ? It is the labour of a whole year. But, suppose it were only necessary to turn up the earth, that supposes the invention of the implements of husbandry ; and the invention of these, supposes that of the forge, and the knowledge of mines, of the art of constructing furnaces, of mechanics, and hydraulics, in short, of almost all the sciences, from which M. Rousseau would *preserve men.* We, therefore, cannot make bread without some care and industry.

" A reasonable man, says M. Rousseau, is still more difficult to " make : we are not sure to succeed after a great deal of study." But, are we always sure of a good harvest. Does the painful labour of autumn secure an abundant harvest for summer ? Be it, however, difficult or not, to form a reasonable man, the fact is, that he cannot be made so without instruction. What is a reasonable man ? One whose judgments are generally just. Now, to judge of the progress of a disease, of the excellence of a drama, or the beauty of a statue, what preliminary knowledge is necessary ? The sciences, and the arts of medicine, poetry, and sculpture. Does M. Rousseau mean by the word *reasonable,* that the man should observe a sagacious conduct ? But such a conduct sometimes supposes a profound knowledge of the human heart, and that knowledge is full as difficult as another. When the author of Emilius decries instruction, it is, he will say, because he has sometimes seen an intelligent man behave ill. That may be. The desires of such a man are often contrary to his knowledge. He may act ill

and

NOTES ON SECTION V.

and see well. This man, however, (M. Rousseau cannot deny) has but one cause of bad conduct in him, which is his criminal passions. Ignorance, on the contrary, has two: one is, the same passions, and the other, the ignorance of what man owes to man, that is to say, of his duties toward society; and these duties are more extensive than is commonly imagined. Instruction, therefore, is always useful.

SECTION VI.

OF THE EVILS PRODUCED BY IGNORANCE; IGNORANCE IS NOT DESTRUCTIVE OF EFFEMINACY: IT DOES NOT SECURE THE FIDELITY OF SUBJECTS; AND IT DETERMINES THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTIONS WITHOUT EXAMINATION. LUXURY CITED AS AN EXAMPLE. THE MISFORTUNES INTO WHICH SUCH JUDGMENTS MAY SOMETIMES PRECIPITATE A NATION. OF THE CONTEMPT AND HATRED DUE TO THE PROTECTORS OF IGNORANCE.

CHAP. I.

OF THE IGNORANCE AND EFFEMINACY OF NATIONS.

IGNORANCE does not preserve a people from effeminacy. It plunges them into it: degrades and corrupts them. The most stupid nations are not the most estimable for their magnanimity, their courage, and the severity of their manners. The Portuguese and modern Romans are ignorant; and they are not the less pusillanimous, voluptuous, and effeminate. It is the same with the greatest part of the Oriental nations.

In

In general, in every country where despotism and superstition engender ignorance, the latter in its turn engenders debility and sloth.

Does government forbid me to think? I give myself up to idleness. An inhabitude to reflection renders application painful, and attention fatiguing (1). Where are then the charms of study? Indifferent to every sort of knowledge no one has sufficient interest with me to engage my attention, and it is only in agreeable sensations that I can then seek my happiness.

He that does not think would feel, and feel deliciously. Men would grow in sensations, if I may use the expression, in proportion as they diminish in thoughts. But can we be constantly affected by voluptuous sensations? No: it is at intervals only that we can enjoy them.

The interval that separates men from these sensations is, among the ignorant and idle, filled up by disgust. To abridge its duration, they provoke themselves to pleasure, exhaust their strength and extinguish desire. Among all nations, what classes are most generally given up to debauchery? Slaves and bigots.

There is no nation more corrupt than the Venetians*, and their corruptions, says Mr. Burke, are the effect

* See Burke's Treatise on the Sublime. I here translate him, but do not pretend to judge of a people whom I know only by the relations of others.

of

of the ignorance in which a despotic aristocracy holds the people. "No citizen dares there think: to make "use of his reason is a crime that is the most punished. "Now he who dares not think would at least feel; and "must from disgust deliver himself up to effeminacy. "Who but an ignorant and voluptuous people could "support the yoke of an aristocratic despotism?

"This the government knows, and encourages its "subjects to debauchery: it offers them at once fetters "and pleasures: they accept the one for the other; "and, in their base souls, the love of luxury always "outweighs that of liberty. The Venetian is nothing "better than a swine, that is nourished by his master, "for his use, and is kept in a stable, where he is suf- "fered to wallow in the mire.

"At Venice, great and little, man and woman, clergy "and laity, all are equally plunged in effeminacy. The "nobles, always in dread of the people, and of each "other, become enervated and degraded from policy, "and corrupt themselves by the same means they cor- "rupt their subjects. They seek to drown in luxury "and debauchery, that sensation of horror, which a "state inquisition must excite in a bold and elevated "mind."

What Mr. Burke here says of the Venetians is equally applicable to the modern Romans, and in general to all ignorant and civilized nations. If the catholic religion, say the protestants, enervates the soul, and at length ruins the empire where it is established, it is by

by propagating ignorance and idleness, for idleness is the mother of all vices, moral and political.

Can the love of pleasure then be a vice? No: nature leads men to the search of it, and all men obey this impulse of nature. But pleasure, that is the relaxation of the intelligent, active, and industrious citizen, is the sole occupation of the idle and stupid. The Spartans, as well as the Persians, were sensible to love: but their love being different, made one of them a virtuous, and the other an effeminate people. Heaven has made women the dispensers of our most lively pleasures. But could heaven intend, that, solely occupied with them, men should, like the silly shepherds of Astrea, have no other employment than that of lovers? It is not in the trifling cares of a languishing passion, but in the activity of his mind, and the acquisition of knowledge, in his labours and application, that man can find a remedy against disquietude. Love is always a theological sin, and becomes a moral sin, when we make it a principal occupation: it then enervates the mind, and degrades the soul.

Nations may, after the Greeks and Romans, make love a divinity*, but not make themselves its slaves.

* Love is a powerful principle of activity in man. It has often changed the face of empires. Love and jealousy opened the ports of Spain to the Moors, and destroyed the dynasty of the Ommiades. Its influence on the moral world, doubtless emboldened the poets to give it a power over the material world that is has not. Hesiod makes it the architect of the universe.

Hercules

Hercules, who fought with Achelous and deprived him of Dejanira, was the son of Jupiter; but the Hercules who spun at the feet of Omphale was but a Sybarite. Every active and intelligent people, resemble the first of these ; they love pleasure, they conquer, but act with moderation ; they think often, and sometimes divert themselves.

With regard to a slavish and superstitious people, they think seldom, are often disquieted, would always divert themselves ; they provoke their appetites and become enervated. The sole antidote to their disquietude would be labour, application, and learning. But, as Sydney says on this subject, the knowledge of a people is always in proportion to their liberty, as their happiness and power is always in proportion to their knowledge. Thus the English being more free, are commonly more learned than the French*, the French than the Spaniards, the Spaniards than the Portuguese, and the Portuguese than the Moors. England is consequently, in proportion to its extent, more powerful

* France, it is said, has in these later times produced more illustrious men than England. Be it so. It is not the less true, that the body of the French nation degenerates daily. France has neither the same interest, nor the same means of acquiring knowledge as England. France is now but little respectable. The citizen there without emulation sinks into idleness. Merit without consideration is despised by the great; and celebrated men now die without successors.

than

than France*, France than Spain, Spain than Portugal, and Portugal than Morocco. The more learning a people have, the more virtuous, powerful, and happy they are. It is to ignorance alone that the contrary effects are to be imputed. There is but one case where ignorance can be desirable: and that is when all is desperate in a state, and when through the present evils others still greater appear behind. Then stupidity is a blessing†: knowledge and foresight are evils. It is then that shutting our eyes against the light, we would hide from ourselves the calamities we cannot prevent. The situation of the inhabitant resembles that of the mariner; the most distressful instant for him is not that when borne on the wreck of his vessel in the midst of the sea, the love of life and hope make him think he sees through the obscurity of the night a neighbouring shore; but when the rising morn, drawing back the curtains of the night, drives away

* To prove the advantage of morality over materiality, heaven, say the English, has decreed, that Great Britain, properly speaking, but a fourth part as large as Spain, and but one third of France, and less populous perhaps than the latter kingdom, should command it by the superiority of its government.

† In the empires of the East, the most pernicious and dangerous gift of heaven, says a celebrated traveller, would be a noble, elevated mind. Virtuous and rational souls bear impatiently the yoke of despotism. Now this impatience is a crime for which they would be punished by the sultan. Few Orientals expose themselves to this danger.

the imaginary land from his sight, and shows him at once the immensity of the sea and of his misery; then hope, that was borne with him on the wreck, forsakes him, and gives place to despair.

But is there any kingdom in Europe where the misfortunes of the inhabitants are without remedy? Destroy ignorance and you will destroy all the seeds of moral evil.

Ignorance not only plunges the people into effeminacy, but even extinguishes in them the sentiment of humanity. The most ignorant are the most barbarous. What people showed themselves in the last war the most inhuman? The ignorant Portuguese. They cut off the noses and ears of the Spanish prisoners. Why do the English and French show themselves the most generous? Because they are the least stupid.

There is no inhabitant of Great Britain that has not more or less learning (2). Every Englishman is obliged to study by the form of his government (3). There is no minister who ought to be, and is, in some respects, more sagacious, no one whom the national cry more immediately informs of his faults. Now if in the science of government, as in every other science, it is from the clashing of contrary opinions that light is produced, there is no country where administration can be better informed, because there is none where the press is more free.

It is not so at Lisbon. How can the citizen there study the science of government? Is it in books? Superstition

Superstition will scarcely suffer the people to read the Bible. Is it in conversation? It is dangerous there to talk of public affairs, and consequently no one there concerns himself about them. Is it, lastly, at the period a great man assumes an office? But then, as I have already said, the time for forming principles is past; it is then the time to apply them: to execute and not to meditate. Whence then can such a nation obtain its generals and its ministers? From among foreigners. Such is the debasement to which ignorance reduces a nation.

CHAP. II.

IGNORANCE DOES NOT SECURE THE FIDELITY OF THE SUBJECT.

SOME politicians have regarded ignorance as favourable to the maintenance of a prince's authority, as the support of his crown and the safeguard of his person. Nothing is less proved by history. The ignorance of the people is indeed favourable to the priesthood. It is not in Prussia, or England, where they can say all and write all, that attempts are made on the life of the monarch, but in Portugal, Turkey, Indostan, &c. In what age was the scaffold erected for Charles I.? In that

that, when superstition commanded in England*, when the people, groaning under the yoke of ignorance, were still without art or industry.

The life of George III. is well secured, and it is not to slavery and ignorance, but to learning and liberty, that he owes his security. Is it so in Asia ? Do we there see any throne secure from the attempt of a murderer? Every power, without limits, is an uncertain power (4). The ages, in which princes are most exposed to the strokes of fanaticism and ambition, are those of ignorance and despotism. Ignorance and slavery destroy empires, and every monarch by whom they are propagated, digs the pit by which at least his posterity will be swallowed up.

If a prince so far debases mankind, as to shut their mouths against oppression, he conspires against himself. If a priest then, armed with the poignard of religion, or an usurper at the head of a troop of banditti, march into the public place, he will be joined by those very people, who if they had clear ideas of justice would, under the standard of the lawful prince, have opposed and punished the priest or usurper. All the East is a witness of the truth of what I advance. Every throne has been there dyed with the blood of its sovereign.

* At the time of the decapitation of Charles I. it was not superstition, but fanaticism, that commanded in England. Perhaps, our author might reply, that these being two extremes, their effects are naturally similar. T.

sovereign. Ignorance, therefore, does not secure the fidelity of the subject.

Its principal effects are to expose an empire to all the evils of a bad administration, to diffuse over all minds a darkness, that soon passing from the governed to the governors, brings down tempests on the head of the monarch.

In polished countries, if ignorance, the too frequent companion of despotism, exposes the life of kings, occasions disorder in the finances, and injustice in the distribution of taxes; what man will dare to avow himself an enemy to science, and a protector of ignorance, which, opposing all useful reformation, not only prolongs the duration of public calamities, but renders men also incapable of the fixed attention, which the discussion of most political questions requires.

I shall take luxury for an example. In how many lights may it be considered! How many contradictions do we find in the decisions of moralists on this subject! How much discernment and attention are necessary to resolve this political problem! How prejudicial are errors on similar questions, sometimes to empires; and, consequently, how detrimental is ignorance to mankind!

 CHAP.

CHAP. III.

OF THE QUESTION CONCERNING LUXURY.

WHAT is luxury ? It is in vain to attempt a precise definition of it. The word Luxury, like Greatness, is one of those comparative expressions, that do not offer to the mind any determinate idea : that only express the relation, which two or more objects have to each other. It has no fixed sense till the moment it is put, if I may use the expression, into an equation, and we compare the luxury of one nation, class of men, or individual, with that of others of the same rank.

The English peasant, well clothed and fed, is in a state of luxury, compared with a French peasant. The man dressed in coarse cloth, is in a state of luxury, compared to a savage covered with a bear's skin. All things, even to the feathers that adorn the cap of a wild Indian, may be regarded as luxury.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

IS LUXURY USEFUL AND NECESSARY.

It is the interest of every nation to form great men in the arts, the sciences of war, administration, &c. Now, great talents are constantly the fruit of study and application. Man, slothful by nature, cannot be drawn from his repose but by a powerful motive. What can be that motive? Large rewards. But of what nature should be the rewards decreed by a nation? Are we to understand by the word Reward, the gift of what is merely necessary? No, certainly. The word constantly implies the gift of some superfluity (5), either of the pleasures, or the conveniences of life. Now, every one to whom these superfluities are granted, is in a state of luxury, compared with the majority of the people.

It is evident therefore, that as the minds of men cannot be drawn from a stagnation that is detrimental to society, but by the hope of rewards, that is, of superfluities, the necessity of luxury is apparent, and that in this sense it is useful.

But, it will be said, it is not against this sort of luxury or superfluity, the reward of great talents, that

 moralists

moralists contend; but against that destructive luxury which produces intemperance, and above all, that avidity of wealth, the corruptor of the manners of a nation, and forerunner of its ruin.

I have often attended to the discourses of moralists, and frequently recollect their vague panegyrics on temperance, and their still more vague declamations against riches; and to the present hour, I have not found one among them who has fully examined the accusations brought against luxury, and the calamities that are imputed to it; or who has, in my opinion, reduced the question to that degree of simplicity which is requisite to its solution.

If the moralists will take the luxury of France for an example, I agree with them to examine its advantages and disadvantages. But before we go further, is it certain, as they incessantly repeat,

1. That luxury produces national intemperance?

2. That this intemperance produces all the evils attributed to it?

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

OF LUXURY AND TEMPERANCE.

THERE are two sorts of luxury: the first is, a national luxury, founded on a certain equality in the distribution of the public wealth. It makes no great appearance (6), yet extends to almost all the inhabitants of a country. This distribution does not permit the citizens to live in the pomp and intemperance of a nabob, but in a certain state of ease and luxury, when compared with the citizens of another country. Such is the situation of an English peasant*, compared with that of a French peasant. Now, the first of these is not always the most temperate.

The second sort of luxury less general (7), more apparent, and confined to a class of citizens more or less numerous, is the effect of a very unequal distribution of the riches of a nation. This luxury is that of despotic governments, where the purses of the little are

* The Spartans were strong and robust; they were therefore sufficiently well fed. The peasants, in certain countries, are meagre and weak; they have not therefore sufficient nourishment. Whence we conclude, that the Spartans lived in a state of luxury, compared with the inhabitants of some other countries.

incessantly emptied to fill those of the great; where some are gorged with superfluities, while others want what is necessary (8). The inhabitants of such a country consume but little: he that has nothing can buy nothing. They are the more temperate in proportion as they are indigent.

Misery is always sober, and the luxury of these governments does not produce intemperance, but national temperance, that is, temperance in the greatest number.

Let us now see whether this temperance be so fruitful of prodigies as the moralists pretend. If we consult history, we shall find that the people commonly the most corrupt, are the sober inhabitants who are in subjection to arbitrary power: that the nations reputed most virtuous, are, on the contrary, those free nations whose riches are the most equally divided, and whose citizens are consequently not always the most temperate. In general, the more money a man has, the more he expends, and the more freely he lives. Frugality, a virtue doubtless respectable and meritorious in an individual, is always in a nation the effect of a powerful cause. The virtue of a people is almost always *the virtue of necessity*: and frugality, for that reason, rarely produces in empires the miracles attributed to it.

The Asiatics, who were slaves, poor, and necessarily temperate under Darius and Tigranes, never had the virtues of their conquerors.

The

The Portuguese, like the Orientals, surpass the English in sobriety, but do no not equal them in valour, industry, virtue, in a word, in happiness (9). If the French were beaten in the last wars, it is not to the intemperance of their soldiers that their defeats are to be attributed. The greatest part of the soldiery must be taken from the class of husbandmen, and the French husbandmen have an habit of sobriety*.

If the moralists continually extol frugality, and decry luxury, it is, because being respectable in their own eyes, they mean to honour themselves by these declamations; because, having no clear ideas of luxury, they confound it with the frequently pernicious cause by which it is produced; and because they think themselves virtuous for being austere, and rational for being discontented. Now, discontent is not reason.

Let men, therefore, distrust modern moralists: in this respect they have but superficial ideas concerning this question. But, it will be said, the writers of antiquity have, in like manner, regarded luxury as the corruptor of Asia. They then deceived themselves in like manner with the moderns.

To know if it be luxury, or the cause of luxury,

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* A Frenchman will reply to this, that it was not indeed to the intemperance of the soldiers, but to the debauchery and effeminacy of the officers and generals, that the French army owed its defeats. T.

that destroys in man all love of virtue, that corrupts and debases the manners of a nation, we must first determine what is meant by the term, *a base people.* Is it one, all the individuals of which are corrupted? There is no such people: there is no country where the order of the common citizens, always oppressed, and rarely oppressors, do not love and esteem virtue. Their interest leads them to it. It is not so with the order of great men. Their interest is to be unjust with impunity; it is to stifle in the hearts of men every sentiment of equity. This interest imperiously commands the great, but not the rest of the nation. The tempest agitates the surface of the sea, but its depths are always tranquil. Such are the inferior class of citizens, in almost every country. Corruption slowly approaches the labourers of the earth, and it is they that compose the greatest part of every nation.

By *a base nation,* then, people can only mean that in which the people in power, that is, the governing party, are enemies to the party governed, or at least indifferent to its happiness*. Now, this indifference

* The words *corruption of manners,* signify nothing more than the division between public and private interest. At what time does this division happen? When all the riches and power of a state are collected into a few hands. There is then no connection between the different classes of the citizens. The great, wholly directed by their private interest, and indifferent to that of the public, will sacrifice the state to their particular passions.

is not the effect of luxury, but of the cause that produces it, that is, the excessive power of the great, and the consequent contempt in which they hold their fellow-citizens.

In the hive of human society, to preserve order and justice, and to chase away vice and corruption, it is necessary that all the individuals be equally employed, and forced to concur equally in the general good, and that the labour be equally divided among them.

If there be any whose riches and birth exempt them from all employment, there will be divisions and unhappiness in the hive. The idle will die of disgust: they will be envied without any reason for envy, because they will not be happy. Their idleness, however, at the same time that it is disgusting to themselves, is destructive to the general welfare. They will devour with discontent the honey that the others produce;

Is it necessary, to be revenged of an enemy, that a negotiation be broken off, the finances be neglected, a war be declared unjust, a battle be lost? They will do all, and agree to all, to gratify their caprice; grant all to favour, and nothing to merit. The courage and diligence of the soldiers and inferior officers will remain without recompence. What is the consequence? That the magistrates have no longer integrity, nor the soldiers courage; that indifference succeeds in their minds, to the love of justice, and of their country; and such a nation will be held in contempt by others, and fall into a debasement. Now this debasemeut will not be the effect of its luxury, but of a too unequal distribution of power and riches, of which luxury itself is an effect.

the

the labourers will die of hunger, and the idlers will not be more happy.

To fix the happiness and virtue of a nation on a solid foundation, it must rest on a reciprocal dependence between all the orders of citizens. If there be statesmen invested with unlimited power, and that have not, at least for the present, any thing to hope or fear from the love or hatred of their inferiors, then all mutual dependence between the great and the little will be broken and these two orders of citizens, under the same name, will compose two rival nations. The man in power will then indulge himself in all things, he will, without remorse, sacrifice to his caprice the happiness of a whole nation.

If the corruption of the people in power never is more manifest than in the ages of the greatest luxury, it is because in those ages the riches of a nation are collected into the smallest number of hands, when the great are most powerful, and consequently, most corrupt.

To ascertain the source of their corruption, and the origin of their power and riches, and of that division of interests, among citizens, who, under the same name, form two inimical nations, we must go back to the formation of the first societies.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

OF THE FORMATION OF COLONIES.

SOME families pass over to an island. We will suppose the soil good, but uncultivated What at the moment of debarkation is the first care of these families? To construct huts, and turn up an extent of ground sufficient for their subsistence.

At this period, wherein consist the riches of this island? In its harvests, and the labour by which they are produced. If this island contains more land than is necessary for the cultivators, the rich among them will be those that have the strongest and most active arms.

The interests of this rising society are at first not complicated, and consequently few laws will there suffice: they may be almost all reduced to the prevention of theft and murder. Such laws are always just, because they are made by the consent of all, and because a law generally adopted in a rising state, is always conformable to the interest of the majority, and consequently wise and beneficent.

We will suppose this society to elect a chief: he will only be a chief in war, under the orders of whom they

combat

combat pirates, and new colonists that would establish themselves in this island. This chief, like every other colonist, will possess no more land than he has cultivated. The only favour they can grant him, is the choice of his ground. He will be in other respects without power.

But will the successors to the first chief long remain in this state of impotency? By what means will they free themselves from it, and at last arrive at arbitrary power?

The object of most of them will be to subject the isle they inhabit. But their efforts will be vain, while the nation is not numerous. It is difficult to establish despotism in a country that being newly inhabited, is not populous. In all monarchies, the progress of power is slow. Of this, the time employed by the sovereigns of Europe in subjecting their great vassals is a proof. The prince who too hastily attacks the property, the life and liberty of powerful proprietors, and would load the people with taxes, will destroy himself. All, great and little, will revolt against him. The monarch would have neither money to raise an army, nor an army to fight against his people.

The time at which the power of a prince or chief increases, is that when the nation is become rich and numerous, when each citizen ceases to be a soldier*,

* There is, perhaps, but one method of preserving an empire from the despotism of an army, and that is, by the inhabitants being at once, as at Sparta, citizens and soldiers.

or

or when, to repel an enemy, the people consent to raise troops, and keep them continually in pay. If the chief preserve the command of them in peace as well as in war, his influence insensibly augments; he profits by it to enlarge his army. When it is sufficiently strong, the ambitious chief throws off the mask; oppresses the people, destroys their property, and plunders the nation: for man, in general, appropriates all he can ravish, and rapine cannot be restrained but by severe laws, and laws are impotent against a chief and his army.

It is thus that a first tax frequently furnishes an usurper with the means of imposing others, till at last, armed with an irresistible power, he can, as at Constantinople, swallow up by his court and his army, all the riches of the nation. The people, then weak and indigent, are attacked by an incurable malady. No law can then secure to the citizens their lives, their property, and their liberty.

For want of this security, every thing returns into a state of war, and all society is dissolved. If the inhabitants still live in the same cities, it is no longer in union, but in a common servitude. A handful of free men are then sufficient to overturn an apparently most formidable empire.

If the army with which the usurper keeps the nation in fetters, be beaten three or four times, he has no resource in the love and valour of his people. He and his soldiers are hated, as well as feared. The citizens

citizens of Constantinople regard the Janizaries as the accomplices of the Sultan, a set of ruffians by whose aid he pillages the empire. If a conqueror attempt to free the people from the fear of the army, they favour his enterprize, and regard him as their avenger.

The Romans were a hundred years at war with the Volsci: they employed five hundred years in conquering Italy: they only showed themselves in Asia, and it became subject to them. The power of Antiochus and Tigranes vanished at their sight, as that of Darius at the sight of Alexander.

Despotism is the old age and last disease of an empire. This malady never attacks it in its youth. The existence of despotism commonly supposes a people to be already rich and numerous. But is it possible that the grandeur, wealth, and extreme population of a state, can sometimes have such fatal consequences?

To elucidate this point, let us consider the effects of extreme riches, and great increase of inhabitants in a kingdom. Perhaps we shall discover in this increase, the first seeds of a despotic power.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

OF THE MULTIPLICATION OF MANKIND IN A STATE, AND OF ITS EFFECTS.

In the island at first uncultivated, in which I placed a small number of families, if we suppose these families to multiply, the isle will become provided with a number of artisans necessary to a nation of agriculturists: the union of these families will soon form a numerous people. If this nation continue to multiply, there will be born in the island more men than can be employed in cultivating the earth, and in the arts subservient to that cultivation. What will become of these superflous inhabitants? The more they increase, the greater will be their charge to the state: whence it will be necessary, either that the superfluity be consumed by a war, or that a law be enacted, as in China, for the exposing of children (10).

A man without property, and without employment in a society, has only three things to chose; either to leave his country and seek a subsistence elsewhere, or to rob for a maintenance, or to invent some new article of commerce, in exchange for which his fellow-citizens may supply his wants. I shall not enquire what becomes of the robber, or voluntary exile. They cease

to belong to this society. My only object is the inventor of a new article of utility or luxury. We will suppose him to discover the secret of painting on cloth, and that this invention suit the taste of but few of the inhabitants; but few of them, therefore, will exchange their commodities for his cloth (11). But if a taste for this sort of cloth become general, and there be a great demand for it, what will he do to answer that demand? He will collect more or less of those men I call superfluous, set up a manufactory in a convenient place, most likely on the side of a river, whose branches extend a considerable way into the country, and will facilitate the transport of his merchandize. Now we will suppose that the continual increase of inhabitants gives rise to the invention of some other commodity, some other article of luxury, and that a new manufacture be set up. The undertaker, for the advantage of his commerce, will naturally fix it on the side of the same river. He will therefore, erect a building near the other's. Several of these manufactories will form a village, and then a town, that will soon contain wealthy citizens; for the profits of commerce are always very great, when the traders being few, have but few rivals.

The riches of this town will draw pleasures thither. To partake of these pleasures, the rich proprietors of lands will quit the country, to pass some months of the year in the town, and for that purpose build houses there. The town increases daily, because poverty there

there finds more resources, vice more impunity, and luxury more means of gratification. This town, at last, takes the name of capital.

Such are in this island the first effects of the great multiplication of its inhabitants. Another effect of the same cause will be the indigence of the greatest part of the people. By the continual increase of their number, there will be more workmen than work: competition will lower the price of labour: that workman will be preferred who sells his goods cheapest, that is, who contents himself with the least profit. Then indigence extends itself; the poor sell, the rich buy; the number of possessors diminish, and the laws become daily more severe.

A people of proprietors may be governed by gentle laws. Confiscations of property, partial or total, is there sufficient to suppress crimes? Among the Germans, Gauls, and Scandinavians, fines, more or less severe, were the only punishments inflicted for different offences.

Where non-proprietors compose the greatest part of a nation, it is different. They can be governed by harsh laws only: when a man is poor, and cannot be fined, he must be punished in his person; and hence arise corporal punishments. Now, these punishments at first inflicted on the poor, are in the course of time, extended to proprietors, and all citizens are then governed by the laws of blood. All things concur to establish these laws.

Does every citizen possess some property in a state? The desire of preserving it is doubtless, the general design of a nation. There are few thefts committed. Do the generality, on the contrary, live without property? Theft is the general aim of that nation; and robbers multiply. Now this spirit of robbery spreading itself throughout, necessarily occasions frequent acts of violence.

Let us suppose, that by the slowness of criminal proceedings, and the facility with which a man without property can transport himself into another country, the guilty almost always escape punishment, and crimes multiply daily. To prevent this, a citizen must be apprehended on the first suspicion. But confinement is itself an arbitrary punishment, which being soon exercised on proprietors themselves, will substitute slavery in the place of liberty. What remedy is there for this national evil? Is there any method by which the gentle laws can be recalled? I know but one, which would be to multiply the number of proprietors, by making a new distribution of the lands. But this distribution is always difficult to be executed. Thus the unequal partition of the national wealth, and the too great increase of men without property, producing at the same time in an empire vices and sanguinary laws, at last develop those seeds of despotism, which ought to be regarded as a new effect of the same cause*.

* The evils arising from extreme population were known to
When

When a numerous people are not, like the Greeks and Swiss, divided into a certain number of federative republics; but compose, like those of Great Britain, one nation, the people being then too numerous, and

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the ancients; and there were no means which they did not employ to diminish it. The Socratic passion in Crete was one of them. This passion, says M. Goques, counsellor in parliament, was there authorised by the laws of Minos†.

If a young man hired himself as a catamite, for a certain term, and ran away from the house of him with whom he had engaged to live, the laws obliged him to return, and remain there till the expiration of the term. The reason of this odd law, say Plato and Aristotle, was the fear they had in Crete of a too great population.

It was with the same view that Pythagoras enjoined his disciples abstinence and fasting. They that fast do not get many children. To the Pythagoreans succeeded the Vestals, and lastly the Monks, who being, perhaps, enjoined the law of continence, for the same reason are, in fact, no other than representatives of the ancient pederasts.

† This was certainly a very foolish law of the wise Minos, and which the dread of excessive population could by no means justify, as there were many other obvious means of preventing it. It is not unlikely, however, that the counsellor in parliament here mentioned, imagined he discovered this law among those of Minos, in order to palliate his own conduct. This practice, however preposterous, was not so barbarous as that of exposing their young children to perish in the highways, and which was likewise ascribed to the dread of excessive population. If this custom, common among the wise Grecians, were to be adopted by the most ignorant of the European nations, we should load them, and justly too, with the appellation of obdurate scoundrels. T.

 too

too far distant from each other, to deliberate on general affairs, are obliged to appoint representatives for each borough, city, province, &c. These representatives assemble in the capital, and it is there they separate their interest from that of the represented.

CHAP. VIII.

OF THE DIVISION OF INTERESTS AMONG THE CITIZENS, PRODUCED BY THEIR GREAT INCREASE.

WHEN the inhabitants, by becoming too numerous to assemble in the same place, have appointed representatives, those representatives taken from the body of the people, chosen by them, and honoured by the choice, propose at first such laws only as are conformable to the public welfare. The law of property is by them held sacred. They respect it the more, as being under the inspection of the nation, if they should betray the confidence reposed in them, they would be punished by disgrace, and perhaps, by a more severe chastisement.

It is, therefore, as I have said, when the people have formed an immense capital; when the complicated interests of the different orders of the state have multiplied

multiplied the laws, when, to avoid the fatiguing study of them, the people repose that duty in their representatives; and lastly, when the inhabitants, solely employed in augmenting the value of their lands, cease to be citizens, and give themselves up to agriculture; that the representatives separate their interests from those of their constituents.

It is then that an indolence in the minds of the constituents, and an active desire of power in the representatives, announce a great change in the state. At that period, all things favour the ambition of the latter.

When, in consequence of their increase, one people are subdivided into several, and there are reckoned in the same nation the rich, the poor, land-holders, merchants, &c. it is not possible, that the interests of these several orders of citizens should be always the same. Nothing, in certain respects, is more contrary to the interest of a nation, than a great number of men without property. They are so many secret enemies, whom a tyrant may at his pleasure arm against the proprietors. Yet nothing is more agreeable to the interest of the manufacturer. The more necessitous people are, the less he will pay for their labour. The interest of the trader, is therefore sometimes incompatible with that of the public. Now, the body of traders is often the most powerful in a state; it includes an infinite number of seamen, porters, and workmen of every sort, who having no other riches

 than

than their labour, are always ready to serve any one that will pay them.

When a nation is composed of an infinity of different people, under the same name, and whose interests are more or less contradictory, it is evident, that for want of unity in the national interest, and a real unanimity in the regulations of the several orders of constituents, the representative, by alternately favouring this or that particular order of citizens, may, by sowing division among them, render himself so much the more formidable to all of them, as by arming one part of the nation against the other, he secures himself against all inquiry.

Impunity gives him more importance, and more audacity. He at last perceives, that in the midst of the anarchy of national interests, he may, from day to day, become more independent, and daily appropriate more authority and riches; that with great wealth he can keep in pay those, who being without property, sell themselves to any one who will buy them; and that the acquisition of each new degree of authority will furnish him with new means of usurping a still greater power.

When, animated with this hope, the representatives have, by a conduct as crafty as dishonest, acquired a power equal to that of the whole nation, from that moment there arises a division of interest between the parties governing and governed. So long as the latter is composed of proprietors of sufficient affluence, brave

† and

and intelligent; in a condition to shake, and even to destroy the authority of the representatives, the body of the nation is in good condition, it is even flourishing. But can this equilibrium of power long subsist between these two orders of citizens? Is it not to be feared, that the riches accumulating insensibly, in a small number of hands, the number of proprietors (the sole support of the public liberty) should daily diminish*; that the spirit of usurpation, always more active in the representatives, than the spirit of conversation and defence in the constituents, should at last turn the balance of power in favour of the former? To what other cause can we ascribe that despotism, which has hitherto put an end to all the different forms of government?

Is it not evident, that in a vast and populous coun-

* When a man grows rich by commerce, he adds the property of many small proprietors to his own. The number of proprietors, and consequently of those whose interest is most closely connected with the national interest, is diminished. On the contrary, the number of men without property, and without interest in the public welfare, is increased. Now, if such men are always ready to hire themselves to any one that will pay them, how can it be imagined, that the man in power will not make use of them, to rule over his fellow-citizens?

Such is the necessary effect of too great an increase of people in an empire. It is the evil circle that has been hitherto run through by all the known forms of government.

 try,

try, the division of interest among the governed must always furnish the governors with the means of usurping an authority, which man's natural love of power makes him always desire?

All empires have had an end: and it is at the period when those nations, becoming numerous, were governed by representatives; and when those representatives, favoured by the division of interests among the constituents, have been able to make themselves independent, that we should date the decline of empires.

In every country, the great increase of inhabitants has been the unknown, necessary, and remote cause of the dissipation of morals*. If the nations of Asia, always cited among the most corrupt, first received the yoke of despotism, it was because of all parts of the world, Asia was the first inhabited and polished.

Its extreme population made it subject to sovereigns: these sovereigns heaped the riches of the

* But is there no law that can prevent the fatal effects of a too great increase of inhabitants, and closely connect the interest of the representatives, with that of the represented? These two interests are, doubtless, better connected in England than in Turkey, where the Sultan declares himself the sole representative of his nation. But if there be forms of government more favourable the one than the other, to the union of private with public interest, there is no one where this great moral and political problem has been perfectly solved. Now, till its complete solution, the increase of people must, in every government, produce a corruption of morals.

state upon a small number of noblemen, and invested them with excessive power; and these nobles plunging into luxury, languished in that corruption, that is, in that indifference for the public welfare, with which history has always so justly reproached the Asiatics.

After having hastily considered the great causes, whose development animated societies, from the moment of their formation to that of their decline; after having pointed out the different states and situations, through which these societies passed, to fall at last into arbitrary power; let us now examine, why this power once established, makes in a nation a distribution of riches, which being more unequal in a despotic government than any other, hurls it more rapidly into ruin.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

OF THE TOO UNEQUAL PARTITION OF THE NATIONAL WEALTH.

THERE is now no form of government, in which the national wealth is, or can be, equally divided. For men to flatter themselves with this equal distribution among a people subject to arbitrary power, is folly.

If in despotic governments, the riches of the whole nation be swallowed up by a small number of families, the reason is plain.

When a people acknowledge a master who can impose taxes on them in an arbitrary manner, and transfer at pleasure the property of one class of citizens, to that of another; the riches of the nation*, must, in a short time, be collected into the hands of favourites.

* The more a prince increases in power, the more inaccessible he is. Under the vain pretext of rendering his royal person more respectable, the favourites screen him from all eyes. Approach is interdicted to his subjects. The monarch becomes an invisible god. Now, what do the favourites intend by this apotheosis? To debase the prince, that they may govern him. For this purpose, they banish him to a seraglio, or surround him by their little society; and all the wealth of the nation is then absorbed by a very few families.

But

But what advantage accrues to the prince from this evil of the state? The following:

An arbitrary monarch, in quality of a man, loves himself above all others. He would be happy, and feels, like a private person, that he partakes of the joy and sorrow of all that surround him. His interest is, that his people, that is his courtiers, should be content. Now their thirst of gold is insatiable. If they be in this respect without modesty, how can he incessantly refuse what they incessantly demand, without discontenting his intimates, and exposing himself to the contagious chagrin of all that surround him? Few men have that courage. He therefore continually empties the purses of his people into those of his courtiers; and it is among his favourites that he divides almost all the riches of the state. This partition being made, what bounds can be set to their luxury? The greater it is, and the more conformable to the situation in which the empire then is, the more that luxury is useful. The evil is only in the productive cause, that is, in the too unequal partition of the national wealth, and in the excessive power of the prince, who, but ill instructed in his duty, and prodigal from weakness, thinks himself generous when he is unjust (12).

But will not the cries of misery inform him of his disgrace? The throne on which a Sultan is seated, is inaccessible to the complaints of his subjects; they cannot reach so far. Besides, what is their happiness

to him, if their discontent have no immediate influence on his present felicity?

Luxury, as I have proved, is in most countries the immediate and necessary effect of despotism. It is, therefore, despotism, that the enemies of luxury should oppose (13). To suppress an effect, we should destroy the cause. If there be a medium of operating a happy change in this matter, it is by an insensible change in the laws and administration (14).

It is necessary, for the happiness of the prince himself, and his posterity, that austere moralists fix the bounds of taxes so firmly, that the sovereign can never displace them. From the moment that the laws, like an insurmountable obstacle, oppose the prodigality of the monarch, the courtiers will set bounds to their desires and demands; they will not ask what they know they cannot obtain.

The prince, they will say, must be less happy. He will, doubtless, have about him fewer courtiers, and such as are less servile; but their servility is not, perhaps, so necessary to his happiness, as may be imagined. When the favourites of a king are free and virtuous, the sovereign accustoms himself insensibly to their virtue. He does not find himself the worse, and his people find themselves much better.

Arbitrary power, therefore, only serves to hasten the unequal partition of the riches of a nation.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

CAUSES OF THE TOO GREAT INEQUALITY IN THEF ORTUNES OF THE PEOPLE.

In countries that are free, and governed by wise laws, no man, doubtless, has power to impoverish his nation to inrich a few individuals. In these countries, however, all the citizens do not enjoy the same fortune. The junction of riches there happens more slowly, but it happens at last.

It is quite right, that the most industrious should gain most; that the most thrifty should save most; and that by riches already acquired, more should be gained. There are persons, moreover, who accumulate wealth by inheritance: and there are merchants, who by venturing large capitals with their vessels, make great profit; in every sort of commerce, money begets money. Its unequal distribution, therefore, is a necessary consequence of its introduction into a state (15).

CHAP. XI.

OF THE MEANS OF PREVENTING THE TOO RAPID ACCUMULATION OF RICHES IN A FEW HANDS.

THERE are a thousand methods of producing this effect. What can hinder a people from declaring themselves the heirs of the whole nation; and in that case, on the decease of a very rich individual, dividing among several a property that would be too considerable for a single person?

Why may not a people, after the example of those of Lucca, so proportion the taxes to the wealth of each individual, that when his land exceeds a certain number of acres, the tax on the supernumerary acres may exceed the rent? In such a country, there can certainly be no very great acquisitions.

A hundred laws of this kind might be invented. There are, therefore, a multitude of ways of preventing a too speedy accumulation of wealth in a small number of hands, and of checking the too rapid progress of luxury.

But can we in a country where money is current, promise ourselves constantly to maintain a just equilibrium among the fortunes of the citizens, so that riches may not at length be distributed in a very unequal

equal manner, and luxury be introduced and increase? This project is impossible. The rich, furnished with necessaries, will always employ their superfluous wealth in the purchase of superfluous commodities (16). Sumptuary laws, it will be said, may suppress this desire. It is true. But the rich then having no longer the free use of their money, it will appear to them less desirable, and they will make fewer efforts to obtain it. Now, in every country where money is current, perhaps the love of money, as I shall prove further on, is a principle of life and activity, whose destruction draws after it that of the state.

The result of this chapter is, that money being once introduced, and always unequally divided among the citizens, will, at length, necessarily introduce a taste for superfluities. The question concerning luxury, is therefore now reduced to the inquiry, whether the introduction of money into a state be useful or detrimental.

In the present condition of Europe, all inquiry of this kind may appear superfluous. Whatever may be said, the French, English, and Dutch, will never be induced to throw their gold into the sea. This question, however, is in itself so curious, that the reader will doubtless consider with some pleasure, the different conditions of two nations, in one of which money is current, and in the other is not.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

OF THOSE COUNTRIES WHERE MONEY IS NOT CURRENT.

WHEN money has no value in a country, by what method can commerce be carried on? By exchange. But exchanges are troublesome; so that there is little traffic, and no works of luxury. The inhabitants of these countries may be wholesomely fed, and well cloathed, and yet not know what in France is called luxury.

But will not a people without money and luxury, have in some respects certain advantages over an opulent people? Yes, certainly: and these advantages will be such, that in a country where the value of money is unknown, perhaps it could not be there introduced without a crime.

A people without money, if they be intelligent, are commonly a people without tyrants*. Arbitrary power is difficult to be established in a country without ca-

* We may also say without enemies. Who will attack a country where nothing is to be got but blows. We know, besides, that a people, such as the Lacedæmonians for example, if they be numerous, are invincible.

nals,

nals, without commerce, and high roads. The prince, who raises his taxes in kind, that is, in provisions, can seldom raise and keep in pay a number of men sufficient to put his people in fetters.

It would have been difficult for an Eastern monarch to have seated and maintained himself on the throne of Sparta, or of rising Rome.

Now, if despotism be the most cruel scourge of nations, and the most fruitful source of their evils, the non-introduction of money, which commonly defends them from tyranny, must be regarded as an advantage.

But did they enjoy the conveniencies of life at Sparta? O ye rich and powerful! why do you ask this question? Are you ignorant that the lands of luxury are those where the people are the most miserable?

Solely employed in gratifying your desires, do you take yourselves for the whole nation? Are you the only beings in nature? Have you no brethren? O men! void of shame, humanity, and virtue, who concenter in your own persons all your affections, and incessantly create for yourselves new wants; know that Sparta was without luxury, without abundance, and that Sparta was happy! Is it in fact the magnificence of furniture, or the refinements of effeminacy, that constitute human felicity? There would then be very few happy. Is happiness to be found in the exquisite delicacies of the table? The different manners of preparing their repasts, by different nations, prove good cheer to be that only to which we have been accustomed.

If dishes artfully prepared excite my appetite, and give me agreeable sensations, they give me also lassitude and disorders; so that, all things considered, the temperate man is, at the end of the year, at least as happy as the glutton*. Whoever has an appetite, and can gratify it, is content†. When a man is well clothed and fed, the remainder of his happiness depends on the manner more or less agreeable, in which he fills up, as I shall presently prove, *the interval between a gratified and a rising want.* Now, in this respect, nothing was wanting to the happiness of the Lacedæmonians: and notwithstanding the apparent austerity of their manners, of all the Greeks, says Xenophon, they were the most happy. When the Spartan had gratified his wants, he entered the amphitheatre;

* Now hear what blessings temperance can bring,
(Thus said our friend §, and what he said I sing)
First health: the stomach (cram'd from ev'ry dish,
A tomb of boil'd and roast, and flesh, and fish,
Where bile, and wind, and phlegm, and acid jar,
And all the man is one intestine war):
Remembers oft the school boy's simple fare,
The temperate sleeps, and spirits light as air.

Pope's Imitation of Horace.

§ Mr. Bethel.

† When the peasant has bacon and cabbage in his pot, he asks not the pullet of the Alps, nor the carp of the Rhine, nor the umber of the lake of Geneva. He wants none of these; nor I neither.

and

and there, in the presence of the old men, and the most beautiful women, he daily displayed the strength and agility of his body, and at the same time evinced, by the vivacity of his replies, all the acuteness and precision of his judgment.

Now, of all occupations proper to fill up *the interval between a satisfied and a rising want,* there is none more agreeable. The Lacedæmonians, therefore, without commerce and without money, were nearly as happy as a people could be. I consequently assert, from the experience of Xenophon, that we may banish money from a state, and still preserve its happiness. To what cause, moreover, are we to refer the happiness of the public, but to the virtue of individuals? The countries in general most fortunate, are those where the inhabitants are the most virtuous. Now, is it in those countries where money is current, that such inhabitants are to be found?

CHAP. XIII.

OF THE PRODUCTIVE PRINCIPLES OF VIRTUE IN THOSE COUNTRIES WHERE MONEY IS NOT CURRENT.

In every government, the principle the most fruitful in virtue, is exactitude in punishing or rewarding actions useful or detrimental to society.

But in what countries are they most scrupulously honoured and punished? In those where glory, general esteem, and the advantages attached to that esteem, are the only known rewards. In those countries, the nation is the sole and just dispenser of such rewards. The general esteem, that gift of public acknowledgment, is granted only to ideas and actions useful to the nation, and every citizen in consequence finds himself necessitated to be virtuous.

Is it so in countries where money is current? No: the public cannot be there the sole possessor of riches, nor consequently the only distributor of rewards. Whoever has money can give it, and will commonly give it to the person who procures him the most pleasure. Now that person is not always the most worthy. In fact, if man would always obtain with the greatest certainty, and the least trouble possible, the object of

of his desires (17), and it be more easy to render himself agreeable to people in power, than to the public, it will then be the people in power he will please. Now, if the interest of those in power be frequently opposite to that of the nation, the greatest rewards will then be, in certain countries, decreed to actions, which though personally useful to the great, are detrimental to the public, and consequently criminal. For this reason it is that riches are so often heaped on men, accused of baseness, and intrigues, of being spies, &c. and that pecuniary rewards, being almost always granted to vice (18), produce so many wicked men, and that money has been always regarded as a source of corruption.

I allow therefore that if I were at the head of a new colony, and would found an empire, and could at pleasure inflame my colonists with a passion either for glory or money, it should be for glory. It ought to be by making the public esteem, and the advantages arising from that esteem, the active principles of these new colonists, that I should compel them to be virtuous.

In a country where money is not current, nothing is more easy than to maintain order and harmony, to encourage talents and virtues, and banish vices. We perceive also the possibility in these countries of an unalterable legislation, which being supposed good, would always preserve the people in the same state of

 happiness.

happiness. This possibility becomes evanescent in countries where money is current.

Perhaps the problem of a perfect and durable legislation there becomes too complicated to be yet resolved. I can only say, that the love of money stifling all spirit, every patriotic virtue, must at length engender all those vices of which it is too often the reward.

But to allow that in a new colony we ought to oppose the introduction of money, is to allow, with the austere moralists, the danger of luxury? No: it is merely allowing that the cause of luxury, that is, the too unequal distribution of riches, is an evil(19). It is one in fact, and luxury is, in certain respects, a remedy for this evil. At the instant of forming a society one might, without doubt, propose to banish money. But can the state of such a society be compared with that in which the greatest part of the nations of Europe now are?

Could it be in countries half-subject to despotism, where money is already current, and riches collected in few hands, that a discerning mind would form such a project? Supposing however the project executed, and the introduction and use of money forbidden in a country, what would be the result? This question I shall now proceed to examine.

CHAP

CHAP. XIV.

OF COUNTRIES WHERE MONEY IS CURRENT.

If among a rich people there be many vicious persons, it is because there are many rewards for vice. If there be a great commerce, it is because money facilitates exchange. If luxury there display itself in all its pomp, it is because a very unequal partition of wealth produces the most apparent luxury, and in order to banish it from a state, money must, as I have already proved, be banished with it. Now, no prince can conceive such a design; and suppose he could conceive it, no nation, in the present state of Europe, would comply with his desires. We will suppose, however, that some monarch, the humble disciple of an austere moralist, should form and execute this project. What would be the consequence? The almost entire depopulation of the state. Suppose, for example, that in France, as at Sparta, the introduction of money, and the use of all furniture not made with the axe, should be prohibited. The mason, the sculptor, the coach-maker, the turner, the varnisher, the hands employed in the manufacture of fine woollens and

 linens,

linens, lace, silk, &c.* must abandon France, and seek a country where they could subsist. The number of these voluntary exiles would amount, perhaps, to one fourth of the inhabitants. Now if the number of husbandmen and common artificers that are necessary for cultivating the land, be always in proportion to the number of consumers, the exile of the fabricators of luxuries, would draw after it that of the agriculturists. The opulent flying with their riches to a foreign land, would be followed by a considerable number of their fellow-citizens, and by a great number of domestics. France would then be deserted. What would be its inhabitants? Some husbandmen whose number, since the invention of the plough, is much smaller than when the land was cultivated with the spade. Now, in this state of depopulation and indigence, what would become of this kingdom? Would it make war on its neighbours? No: it would be without money(20). Would it maintain its own territory? No: it would be without men. Besides France not being, like Switzerland, defended by inaccessible mountains, how can it be imagined, that a kingdom depopulated, open on every side, exposed to attacks in Flanders and Germany, could repel the shock of a numerous enemy? To be

* But on this supposition it will be said, these workmen would return to the labour of the field, and become plowmen, woodcutters, &c. No such thing. Besides, where would they find employment in a country already furnished with a sufficient number of men to till the ground, and cut the wood?

able to resist, the French should have, by their courage and discipline, the same superiority over their neighbours, that the Greeks formerly had over the Persians, or that the French still have over the Indians. But no one European nation has now that superiority over others.

France, therefore, desolated and deprived of its money, would be exposed to the almost certain danger of an invasion. Is there a prince who would on these conditions banish riches and luxury from his kingdom?

CHAP XV.

OF THE PERIOD AT WHICH RICHES RETIRE OF THEMSELVES FROM AN EMPIRE.

THERE is no country where riches are, or ever can be fixed. Like the sea, that by turns overflows and recedes from different shores, wealth, after having carried abundance and luxury to some countries, leaves them to diffuse itself among others (21). It formerly resided for a time at Tyre and Sidon, passed from thence to Carthage, and then to Rome. It now sojourns in England. Will it remain there? I know not. But this I know, that a nation enriched by its

Cause of the flux and reflux of national wealth.

its commerec and industry, will impoverish its neighbours, and at last make them unable to purchase its merchandize; that in a nation rich in money, and in paper, the representative of money, and gradually increasing in wealth, provisions and the labour of the artificer will grow continually dearer*; that all other things remaining the same†, an opulent nation not being able to furnish its provisions and merchandize, at the price of a poor nation, the money of the former will insensibly pass into the hands of the latter, who becoming opulent in turn, will ruin itself in like manner (22).

This, perhaps, is the principal cause of the flux and reflux of the riches of an empire. Now, riches, in retiring from a country where they have sojourned, leave almost always behind them, the dung of baseness and despotism. A rich nation that becomes poor, passes rapidly from decay to entire destruction. The only resource left, is to resume masculine manners, which are alone compatible with its poverty (23). But nothing is more rare than this moral phenomenon. History affords us no example of it. When a

* Labour becoming very dear in a rich nation, that nation draws more from another than it carries to it. It therefore sooner or later, must impoverish itself.

† We know what a sudden augmentation was made in the price of provisions by the transportation of American gold into Europe.

nation

nation falls from wealth to indigence, it has nothing to expect but a conqueror and fetters. To deliver it from this evil, the love of glory must succeed to that of money. Now, a people that have been a long time polished and commercial, are scarcely susceptible of the love of glory, and every law that damps their desire of wealth hastens their ruin.

In the political, as in the natural body, there must be a soul, an animating faculty, which enlivens and puts it in action. What must that be?

CHAP. XVI.

OF THE SEVERAL PRINCIPLES OF ACTION IN NATIONS.

ARE there among men any individuals without desires? Scarcely any. Are their desires the same? There are two of them common to all men.

The first is, that of happiness.

The second, that of a power necessary to procure happiness.

Have I a taste? I would have the power to gratify it. The desire of power, as I have already proved, is therefore necessarily common to all. But by what

means

means can a man acquire power over his fellow-citizens? By the fear, which he excites in them, and by the love with which he inspires them; that is to say, by the good and the harm that he can do them: and hence the respect we have for the strong, whether virtuous or wicked.

But in a free country, where money is not current, what advantage can this respect procure a hero, who for example, has contributed the most to gain a battle? It will give him the choice of the spoils taken from the enemy: the most beautiful slave, the finest horse, the richest tapestry, the most sumptuous chariot, the most brilliant armour (24). In a free nation, public esteem and respect* is a power, and the desire of that esteem there becomes in consequence a potent principle of action. But is this moving principle that of a people subject to despotism, of a people where money is current; where the public are without power; where its esteem is not the representative of any sort of pleasure or authority? No: in such a country, the two only objects of desire of the citizens are, the favour of the despot, and great riches; to the possession of which every one may aspire.

Their source, it will be said, is often infected. The love of money is destructive of the love of country, of talents, and of virtue (25). I know it: but how

* This esteem is really a power, which the ancients expressed by the word *authoritas*.

can

can it be imagined, that men should despise money, which succours them in distress, relieves them from pains, and procures them pleasures. There are countries where the love of money becomes the principle of national activity, and where this love is consequently salutary. The worst of all governments, is that where there is no principle of action (26). A people without desires, or without action, are despised by their neighbours; now their esteem is of more importance to the prosperity of a nation than is commonly imagined (27).

In every kingdom where money is current, and merit does not lead to honours or power, let the magistrate take good heed how he damps or extinguishes in the people the love of money and of luxury. He will stifle in them all principle of action.

CHAP. XVII.

OF MONEY, CONSIDERED AS ONE OF THE PRINCIPLES OF ACTION.

MONEY, and paper representing money, facilitate loans. All governments abuse this facility. Loans are every where multiplied: their interest is augmented. To discharge them, taxes are heaped on taxes. Their burden now overloads the most powerful empires of Europe, and yet this evil is not the greatest that the love

love of money and its representative paper have produced.

The love of riches does not extend to every class of citizens, without inspiring the governing party with a desire of rapine and oppression (28).

Hence the construction of a port, an armament, a commercial company, or the undertaking of a war, is pretended to be for the honour of the nation; in short, every pretence to plunder is greedily seized. Then all the vices produced by avidity, making way at once into an empire, successively infect all its members, and at last hurry it into ruin. What specific remedy is there for this evil? None.

The blood that carries nutrition to all the members of a child, and successively enlarges every part, is a principle of destruction. The same circulation of the blood at last ossifies the vessels, destroys their springs, and produces the seeds of death. Yet he that should suspend this circulation would be immediately punished. A stagnation for an instant would be a privation of life. It is so with money. Is it earnestly desired? That desire animates a nation, rouses its industry, enlivens its commerce, increases its riches and power; and the stagnation, if I may so say, of that desire, would be mortal to certain states.

But do not riches, by forsaking those nations where they were first accumulated, occasion their ruin; and by being collected, sooner or later, into a small number of hands, detach them by a private interest from that

that of the public? Yes, without doubt. But in the present forms of government, this evil is perhaps inevitable. Perhaps it is at this epoch that a nation by growing daily more enfeebled, falls into that decline, which is the precursor of its entire destruction; and perhaps it is thus that the moral plant, called an empire, naturally shoots up, increases, grows vigorous, and expires.

CHAP. XVIII.

IT IS NOT IN LUXURY, BUT IN ITS PRODUCTIVE CAUSE, THAT WE OUGHT TO SEEK FOR THE DESTRUCTIVE PRINCIPLE OF GREAT EMPIRES.

WHAT can we conclude, from this hasty examination of the question which I am here discussing? That almost all the accusations brought against luxury are groundless; that of the two species of luxury, mentioned in chap. v. one being always the effect of the too great increase of inhabitants, and of the despotic form of their governments, supposes a very unequal distribution of the national wealth; that such distribution is doubtless a great evil; but that luxury when once established, beçomes, if not an efficacious

cacious remedy, at least a palliative for this evil (29). It is the magnificence of the great, that daily brings back money and activity to the inferior class of citizens.

The rage with which most moralists inveigh against luxury, is the effect of their ignorance. Let this rage be confined to a sermon, for that requires no precision of ideas. Works of that sort, applauded by a timorous and benevolent old man, are too vague, too enthusiastic, and too ridiculous to gain the esteem of an enlightened auditory.

What good sense examines, the ignorance of the preacher peremptorily determines. His superficial and confident understanding never knows how to doubt. Unhappy would be the prince who assented to such declamations, and who, without previous changes in government, attempted to banish all luxury from a nation, where the love of money is the principle of action. He would soon depopulate his country, enervate the industry of his subjects, and throw their minds into a languor that would be fatal to his power.

I shall be content if these first, and perhaps superficial ideas, that arise from a consideration of the question concerning luxury, be regarded as an instance of the different points of view from which we ought to consider every important and complicated problem in morality; (30) if from hence is perceived all the influence that a solution, more or less accurate, of similar problems has on the public happiness, and consequently

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the scrupulous attention with which such examinations should be made.

Whoever declares himself the patron of ignorance, proclaims himself an enemy of the state, and, without knowing it, commits treason against humanity.

Among all nations, there is a reciprocal dependence between the perfection of legislation, and the progress of the human understanding. The more intelligent the citizens are, the more perfect their laws will be. Now, it is on their goodness alone, as I am going to prove, that the public felicity depends.

NOTES ON SECTION VI.

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1. (page 73.) THE aversion of an ignorant people to application extends even to their amusements. If they love gaming, it is at games of chance alone they play. If they are fond of an opera, it is poems without words, if I may so express myself. It is of little consequence to them whether their minds be employed, if their ears be but struck with agreeable sounds. Among all their pleasures, those that require neither knowledge nor judgment are preferred.

2. (p. 78.) Why are great men, in England, more intelligent in general than elsewhere? Because they have an interest so to be. In Portugal, on the contrary, why are they so frequently ignorant and stupid? Because no interest urges them to instruction.

The science of the first of these, is that of man and of government.

That of the second, is the science of the levees, and journies of their monarch.

But have they in England, thrown all those lights on politics and morality, that might be expected from so free a people? I doubt it. Intoxicated with their glory, the English do not suspect any defect in their present form of government. Perhaps the French writers have, on this subject, views more profound and more extensive. There are two causes of this effect.

The first is the state of France. Before the misfortunes of a country are excessive, and have entirely broken the spirits of the people, they quicken their perception, and become a principle of activity in them. When a people suffer, they would throw off their calamities; and that desire produces an inventive faculty.

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NOTES ON SECTION VI.

The second is, perhaps, the little liberty the French writers enjoy. When the man in place commits an oversight, or act of injustice, it must be treated with respect. Of all crimes in that kingdom, the one most severely punished is complaint. When a man would there write on the affairs of administration, he must go back in morality and politics, to those simple and general principles, whose developement will indicate, in a concealed manner, the route that government ought to take. The French writers have the most grand and extensive ideas of this kind*, they have therefore rendered themselves more universally useful than the English; who, not having the same motives to elevate themselves to first and general principles, compose good works, but almost solely applicable to their particular form of government, and their particular circumstances; in a word, to the affairs of the present day.

3. (p. 78.). There is, in London, no labourer or porter, who does not read the newspapers, and suspect the venality of his representatives; and does not think in consequence, that he ought to instruct himself in his rights, in quality of citizen; so that no member of parliament dares propose a law contrary to the liberty of the nation. If he should do it, he would be cited by the party in opposition, and the public papers, before the people, and would be exposed to their vengeance. The body of the parliament is therefore controlled by the nation. No arm is now sufficiently strong to enchain such a people. Their subjection is therefore far off. Is it impossible? I will not maintain that. Perhaps their present immense riches presage that future event.

4. (p. 80.) The last king of Denmark certainly doubted the legitimacy of a despotic power, when he permitted celebrated

* This is evidently the design of a French Treatise, entitled 'L'An deux mille quatre cent quarante,' and published in England, under the title of "Memoirs of the Year Two thousand "five hundred." T.

writers

NOTES ON SECTION VI.

writer to controvert his rights and pretensions, and to examine what limits the public interest ought to set to his power. What magnanimity in a sovereign! Was his future authority thereby enfeebled? No, and this conduct that rendered him dear to his people, ought to make him for ever respectable to humanity.

5. (p. 83.) In the heroic ages, as those of Hercules, Theseus, Fingal, &c. it was by the gift of a gorgeous quiver, a well-tempered sword, or a beautiful slave, that the virtues of a warrior were recompensed. In the time of Manlius Capitolinus, it was by the addition of two acres of land, that his country discharged its obligations to a hero. The tenth of a parish, that is now granted to the vilest among the monks, would have then recompensed a Scævola, or an Horatius Cocles. If, in these days, all service rendered to our country be paid in money, it is because money is the representative of those ancient gifts. The love of superfluities has been in all times the motive and principle of man. But in what manner the gifts of public acknowledgment should be administered, and what sort of superfluities should be preferred as a recompence for talents and virtue, is a moral problem equally worthy the attention of the minister and the philosopher.

6. (p. 85.) When great riches are diffused among a great number of citizens, each of them lives in a state of ease, and of luxury too, when compared with the citizens of another nation, and yet has but little money to lay out in what is called magnificence.

Among such a people, luxury is, if I may so say, national, but little apparent.

On the contrary, where all the money is collected into a few hands, each of these has large sums to lay out in sumptuosity.

Such a luxury supposes a very unequal partition of the national wealth; and that partition is doubtless a public calamity. Is it the same with that national luxury which supposes all the inhabitants in a certain state of ease, and consequently a nearly equal partition of the same riches? No; this luxury, far from being a misfortune, is a public good. Luxury, therefore, is not in itself an evil.

7. (ibid.)

NOTES ON SECTION VI.

7. (p. 85.) By the number, and especially by the sort of manufactures of a country we may judge in what manner its riches are distributed. Are all the people in easy circumstances? All would be well cloathed. A great number of manufactories of stuffs of a common quality are consequently established. They are well made, solid and durable; for the inhabitants are provided with money enough to clothe themselves, but not frequently to change their dress.

Are the riches of the country collected, on the contrary, into a few hands? The greatest part of the people must languish in misery. Now the indigent, not being able to purchase clothes, many of the manufacturer just mentioned must sink. What will be substituted in their room? Some manufactures of stuffs, rich and brilliant, but not durable; for opulence, ashamed to wear out a habit, would change it often. Thus in a government all things depend on each other.

8. (p. 86.) When I see, said a great king, delicacy and profusion on the table of the rich and great, I suspect a scarcity among the people. Now, I like to know, that my people are well fed and well clothed; I would not tolerate poverty but at the head of my regiments. Poverty is brave, active, vigilant; for it is covetous of riches, and will pursue them through the greatest dangers: and because man is more resolute in conquering, than in preserving, and the thief more courageous than the merchant; the latter is more opulent, and better knows the worth of riches; the thief always exaggerates their value.

9. (p. 87.) Great Britain is of a small extent, yet is respected by all Europe. What better proof can be given of its wise administration, and of the prosperity and courage of its people, in short, of that national happiness which legislators and philosophers propose to procure mankind; the first by their laws, and the last by their writings?

10. (p. 95.) The expence or consumption of men, occasioned by commerce, navigation, and the exercise of certain trades, is, we

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are told, very considerable. So much the be'ter. It i necessary for the tranquillity of a very populous country, that the expence of this sort, should be, if I may venture the expression, equal to the income; or that the state, as in Switzerland, consume the surplus of its inhabitants in the wars of strangers*.

11. (p. 96.) It has been said, that luxury augments the industry of the husbandman; and it was truly said. If he desire to make frequent exchanges, he will be obliged to improve his land, and augment his harvest.

12. (p. 107.) Of the amount of taxes imposed on the people, one part is destined to the support and amusement of the sovereign; but the other ought to be applied solely to the necessities of the state. If the prince be proprietor of the first part, he is but administrator of the second. He may be liberal of the one, he ought to be frugal of the ther.

The public treasure is a pledge in the hands of the sovereign. The greedy courtier, I know, gives the name of generosity to the dissipation of this trust; but the prince, by whom it is violated, commits an injustice and a real robbery. The duty of a monarch is to be parsimonious of the property of his subjects. "I should think "myself unworthy of the throne, said a great prince, if, as deposi-

* This appears to be wretched policy. Mankind are in a miserable state indeed, if they be obliged to murder themselves, or be murdered by others, to avoid being too populous. How few countries of Europe are there, that would not nourish many times the number of their present inhabitants, if the land were cultivated in the manner in which some countries are? Besides, how many millions of acres are there in America, and other parts of the earth, which, by their luxuriance, seem to court the sluggish hand of man, and to which *the superfluous inhabitants* (a very vague term) might emigrate in large bodies, and where they might enjoy the same form of government, and the same liberty, as in their native country? T.

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NOTES ON SECTION VI.

" tary of the receipts of the taxes, I should bestow a single pension " to enrich a favourite or informer."

The legitimate employment of all taxes raised for the maintenance of the state, is the payment of troops for the repelling a war from a kingdom, and the payment of magistrates for the maintenance of peace and order within the kingdom.

Tiberius himself frequently repeated to his favourites, " I " shall take great care how I touch the public treasury. If I " should exhaust it in foolish expences, I must refill it ; and if, " for that purpose, I have recourse to unjust means, it will shake " my throne."

13. (p. 108.) How are we to distinguish the luxury that is really detrimental ? By the sort of merchandise exposed in the shops : the richer those articles are, the greater disproportion there is between the fortunes of the citizens. Now this great disproportion, always an evil in itself, becomes a much greater evil by the multiplicity of tastes which it produces. These tastes will be gratified. To effect this, immense treasures are necessary. There are then no bounds to the desire of riches ; nothing that men will not do, to attain them. Virtue, honour, their country, all are sacrificed to the love of money.

On the contrary, in the country where men are content with what is necessary, they may be at once happy and virtuous.

Excessive luxury, which is almost every where attended by despotism, supposes a nation to be already divided between oppressors and oppressed, robbers and robbed. But if the robbers be the smallest number, why are they not crushed by the efforts of the majority ? To what do they owe their security ? To the impossibility which the robbed find in giving the word, and of all assembling on the same day. Besides, the oppressor, with the money which he has already obtained by plunder, can levy an army to attack the oppressed, and conquer them in detached parties. Thus the plundering of a nation subject to despotism continues, till at last depopulation, and the misery of the people, have reduced them both, oppressors and oppressed, beneath to the yoke

of a neighbouring power. A nation, in that state, is composed of none but indigent people without courage, and robbers without justice. It is debased, and destitute of virtue.

It is not so in a country where riches, being in a manner equally divided among the inhabitants, the latter are all in a state of competency when compared with the people of other countries. There, no man is rich enough to enslave his countrymen. Each, restrained by his neighbour, is more solicitous to preserve than usurp. The desire of preservation there becomes the general and predominant desire of the largest and richest part of the nation. Now, it is this desire, and the state of ease among the inhabitants, together with a respect for the property of others, that, in every people, fecundates the seeds of virtue, justice, and happiness. It is, therefore, to the cause of a certain luxury, that we should attribute almost all the calamities which are imputed to luxury itself.

14. (p. 108.) The courtiers, we are told, model themselves after their prince. If, therefore, he despise luxury and effeminacy, will they not disappear? Yes, for a moment. But to produce a durable change in the manners of a people, neither the example, nor the ordinance of a sovereign, is sufficient. His commands will not change a nation of Sybarites, into a robust, laborious, and valiant people. That must be the work of the laws. Let the people be every day compelled, for some hours, to labour, and every day exposed to some little danger, and they will, at length, become robust and brave: for strength and courage, say the king of Prussia and Vegetius, are acquired by a habit of labour and danger.

15. (p. 109.) In a free country, the collection of the natural wealth into a few hands, takes place slowly; it is the work of ages; but, as it advances the government tends to an arbitrary power, and consequently to its dissolution.

The republican state is the virile age of an empire; despotism is its old age. When an empire once becomes old, it seldom recovers its youthful vigour. Have the rich a part of the nation in

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NOTES ON SECTION VI.

their pay? With that part, they will subject the rest to despotism, aristocracy, or monarchy. When any new laws are proposed in that empire, they are all in favour of the rich and great, none in favour of the people. The spirit of legislation corrupts, and that corruption announces the fall of the state.

16. (p. 111.) Nothing is more contradictory than the opinions of the moralists on this subject. When they agree on the utility and necessity of commerce in certain countries, they would, at the same time, introduce an austerity of manners, totally incompatible with the spirit of commerce.

In France, the moralist, who in the morning recommends to the government the care of rich manufactures, declaims in the evening, against luxury, public exhibitions, and the manners of the capital.

But, what is the object of government, when it improves these manufactures, and extends its commerce? To attract the wealth of its neighbours. Now, who doubts, that the manners and amusements of the capital do not concur in the same effect; that the theatres and actresses, the money they spend and cause strangers to spend, are not one of the most lucrative parts of the commerce of Paris? What then, ye moralists, is the object of your contradictory declamations?

17. (p. 117.) No one should wonder at the extreme love of man for money. His indifference to riches would be a phenomenon truly surprising. In every country where riches are exchanged for every sort of pleasure, they must necessarily be as eagerly pursued, as pleasures themselves. To extinguish among a people the love of riches, would require the birth of a Lycurgus, and the prohibition of money. Now what a remarkable concurrence of circumstances is requisite to the forming of such a legislator, and a people proper to receive his laws.

18. (ibid.) From the moment that honours are no longer the reward of honorable actions, the manners become corrupt. On the arrival of the duke of Milan at Florence, contempt, says Machiavel,

NOTES ON SECTION VI.

avel, was the portion of virtue and talents. The Florentines, without discernment and without courage, were entirely degenerate. If they sought to surpass each other, it was in the magnificence of dress and in vivacity of repartees. The most satiric was with them the most witty. Is there, at this time, a nation in Europe, whose present turn of mind resembles that of the Florentines, at the time just mentioned? (Does not the author, by this question, mean to refer to the French nation? T.)

19. (p. 118.) It is not on the greater or less quantity of national riches, but on their more or less equal distribution, that the happiness or misery of a people depends. Suppose half the riches of a nation were to be annihilated, and the other half to be divided among the people in a manner nearly equal, the state would be almost equally happy, and powerful. (This must be understood of the internal police of the nation, and in time of peace only. T.)

Of all commerce, that whose profits are divided into a great number of hands, is the most advantageous to every nation. The more subjects there are in a nation, who are free, independent, and enjoy a mediocrity, the more powerful that nation is. For this reason, no wise prince will load his people with taxes, or deprive them of their ease, or abridge their liberty, either by a great number of informers, or by regulations in the police that are too severe or too incommodious. A monarch who does not regard the ease and liberty of his subjects, will see their depressed spirits languish in torpitude. Now this malady of the mind is so much the more distressing, as it is, for the most part, already incurable, before it is perceived.

20. (p. 120.) If the introduction of money be forbidden in a state, it must either adopt the laws of Sparta, or be exposed to the invasion of its neighbours. How can it long resist, if, being always liable to their attacks, it cannot attack them in turn.

In every state, to repel war, now so expensive, it is necessary that a people have either great riches, or, with their poverty, the courage and discipline of the Spartans.

Now;

NOTES ON SECTION VI.

Now, what provides a government with great riches? Great taxes, levied on the superfluities, and not on the wants of the people. What do great taxes suppose? Large consumptions. If the English lived like the Spaniards, on bread, water, and onions, England would soon be impoverished; and being incapable of maintaining fleets and armies, would be no longer respected. Its present power, founded on its immense revenues, would be soon destroyed, if its taxes, as I have just said, were levied on the necessaries, and not on the conveniences of the inhabitants.

The most habitual crime of European governments, is their avidity, in appropriating to themselves all the money of the people. Their thirst is insatiable. What follows? That the subjects, disgusted with their conveniencies, from the great difficulty they find in procuring them, are without emulation, and without shame of their poverty. From that moment the consumption diminishes, the lands remain uncultivated, and the people are plunged in idleness and indigence: for the love of riches has for its basis,

1. The possibility of acquiring them.
2. The assurance of preserving them.
3. The right of using them.

21. (p. 121.) Suppose Great Britain were to attack India, despoil it of its treasures, and transport them to London. The English would then be in possession of immense riches. What would be the consequence? They would first exhaust England of all that could contribute to their pleasures, and then draw from strangers the most exquisite wines, oils, coffee, &c. in short, all that could flatter their taste; and all nations would partake of the Indian treasures. I doubt whether any sumptuary laws could prevent this dispersion of their wealth. These laws, always easy to be eluded, are besides too invasive of the right of property, the first and most sacred of all rights. But, what means are there to fix the riches of an empire? I know of none. The ebb and flood of money are in morals the effects of causes as constant, necessary, and powerful, as in physics, the flux and reflux of the sea.

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NOTES ON SECTION VI.

22. (p. 122.) Nothing is more easy than to trace the several progressions by which a nation passes from poverty to riches; from the possession, to the unequal partition of wealth; from that unequal partition to despotism, and from despotism to ruin. A man, when poor, applies himself to commerce or agriculture, and makes a fortune. He is imitated by others, who in like manner grow rich. Their number increases, and the whole nation insensibly finds itself animated with a spirit of labour and gain. Its industry is thus roused, its commerce extends, and it every day increases in riches and power. But if its riches and power are insensibly collected into a few hands, then a taste for luxury and superfluities will possess the great; for riches are not acquired, if we except a few misers, but to be expended. The love of superfluities will excite in the great a thirst for gold, and a desire of power; they would command like tyrants over their fellow-citizens. They will attempt all things for this purpose, and it will be then that arbitrary power, introducing itself among the people in the train of riches, will by degrees corrupt their manners, and degrade their character.

When a commercial nation attains the period of its grandeur, the same desire of gain that produced at first its strength, and its power, will thus become the cause of its ruin.

The principle of life, that displays itself in a majestic oak, elevates its trunk, extends its branches, and makes it the monarch of the forest, is also the principle of its dissolution.

But may not the duration of empires be prolonged, by suspending in the people the too rapid progress of this desire of gold? I reply, the love of riches, may be weakened in the citizens, but who can be sure that they will not then fall into that Spanish indolence, which is the most incurable of all political maladies?

23. (ibid.) The virtues of poverty are, in a nation, boldness, intrepidity, sincerity, and constancy: in short, a sort of noble ferocity. They are, among a rising people, the effect of that sort of equality, which reigns at first among all the citizens.

 But

NOTES ON SECTION VI.

But do these virtues remain a long time in an empire? No: they seldom grow old there; the mere increase of inhabitants is frequently sufficient to banish them.

24. (p. 124.) There are no talents or virtues that the hope of honours arising from the public esteem and acknowledgment, will not create in a people; nothing that the desire of obtaining them will not excite men to undertake. Honours are a coin, whose value rises or falls according to the greater or less equity with which they are distributed. The public interest requites that they should preserve the same value, and be dispensed with as much equity as œconomy. Every wise people should requite the services done them by honours. If they acquit them in money, they will soon exhaust their treasury, and being then unable to recompense talents and virtue, they will be both stifled in their birth.

25. (ibid.) When money becomes the sole principle of activity in a nation, it is an evil, for which I know no remedy. Rewards in property would doubtless be more favourable to the production of virtuous men: but before they could be established, what changes must be made in the governments of most nations of Europe?

26. (p. 125. To what cause is the extreme power of England to be attributed? To the motion, the play of all the opposite passions. The party in opposition, excited by ambition, vengeance, or a love of their country, there protect the people from tyranny. The court party, animated by the desire of places or bribes, there sustain the minister, against the sometimes unjust attacks of opposition.

The restless avidity of a commercial people, keeps the industry of the artisan continually awake, and by that industry the riches of almost all the universe are transported into England. But in a nation so rich and powerful, how can they flatter themselves that the several parts will always remain in that equilibrium of force, which now secures its repose and grandeur? That equilibrium is

perhaps

perhaps very difficult to maintain. The epitaph of a duke of Devonshire, may be hitherto applied to the English: *A faithful subject to good kings, a formidable enemy to tyrants.* Will that application always be made? Happy the nation of whom M. Gourville could say, *Their king, when he is the man of his people, is the greatest king in the world; but when he would be more he is nothing.* This saying, repeated by Sir William Temple, to Charles II. at first hurt that monarch's pride; but recollecting himself, he took Temple by the hand, and said, *Gourville is right, and I will be the man of my people.*

27. (p. 125.) It is a Jewish spirit in the mother-country, that frequently carries the fire of revolt into its colonies. When the colonists are treated like negroes, they become irritated, and if they be numerous they resist, and at last separate themselves, as the ripe fruit separates from the branch.

To secure the love and submission of the colonies, a nation should be just. It should frequently remember, that it sent to those distant lands such superfluous people only, as were a burden to itself, and that consequently it has no right to require any thing from them, but succours in time of war, and the observance of a federative treaty, to which the colonies will always submit, when the mother-country does not attempt to appropriate to herself all the profits of their labours.

28. (p. 126.) In every country where money is current, its unequal distribution must at length produce a general poverty; and that kind of poverty is the mother of depopulation. Indigence has little concern for her children, affords them little nourishment, and brings up but few. As a proof of this, I adduce the savages of North America, and the slaves of the colonies. The excessive labour required of the breeding negroes, and the little care taken of them, together with the tyranny of their masters, all concur to their sterility.

If in America, the production of negroes be nearly equal to their consumption among those of the Jesuits only, it is because they,

NOTES ON SECTION VI.

they, being better instructed, take more care of their slaves, and treat them with less barbarity.

When a prince maltreats his subjects, and loads them with taxes, he depopulates his country, and destroys the activity of his people; for extreme misery necessarily produces discouragement, and discouragement idleness.

29. (p. 128.) A too unequal partition of the national wealth precedes, and always produces a taste for luxury. When an individual has more money than is necessary for his wants, he gives himself up to the desire of superfluities. The enemy of luxury, therefore, ought to seek in the cause itself of the too unequal partition of riches and in the destruction of despotism, a remedy for those evils of which he accuses luxury, but which luxury in reality helps to suppress. Every kind of superfluity has its productive cause.

A luxury in horses, in preference to jewels, especially among the English, is in part the effect of the long residence in the country. If they all reside there, it is because they are, in a manner obliged to it by the constitution of their government. (I suppose the author means, that they are obliged to visit their constituents, which however is not often the case. T.)

It is the form of government that directs, in an invisible manner, even the tastes of individuals. It is always to their laws that the people owe their manners and their customs.

30. (ibid.) We cannot be too scrupulous in examining every important question in morality and politics. It is, if I may so say, at the bottom of this investigation, that science and truth are found. The gold is found at the bottom of the crucible.

SECTION VII.

THE VIRTUES AND HAPPINESS OF A PEOPLE ARE NOT THE EFFECTS OF THE SANCTITY OF THEIR RELIGION, BUT OF THE SAGACITY OF THEIR LAWS.

CHAP. I.

OF THE SMALL INFLUENCE OF RELIGIONS ON THE VIRTUES AND FELICITY OF A PEOPLE.

MEN, of more piety than knowledge, have imagined that the virtues of a nation, its humanity and the refinement of its manners, depend on the purity of its worship. The hypocrites, interested in propagating this opinion, have published without believing it; and the common part of mankind have believed it without examination.

This error once asserted, has been almost every where received as a certain truth. Experience and history teach us, however, that the prosperity of a people does not depend on the purity of their worship, but on the excellence of their legislation.

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Of what importance, in fact, is their belief? That of the Jews was pure, and the Jews were the dregs of nations: they have never been compared either to the Egyptians, or the ancient Persians.

It was under Constantine that Christianity became the ruling religion. It did not however restore the Romans to their primitive virtues. There was not then seen a Decius, who devoted himself for the good of his country; or a Fabricius, who preferred seven acres of land to all the riches of the empire.

At what period did Constantinople become the sink of all the vices? At the very time the Christian religion was established. Its worship did not change the manners of the sovereigns; their piety did not make them better. The Most Christian kings have not been the greatest of monarchs. Few of them have displayed on the throne the virtues of Titus, Trajan, or Antoninus. What pious prince can be compared to them?

What I have said of monarchs, I say of nations. The pious Portuguese, so ignorant and credulous, are not more virtuous or more humane than the less credulous and more tolerant English.

Religious intolerance is the daughter of sacerdotal ambition and stupid credulity. It never makes men better. To have recourse to superstition, credulity, and fanaticism, to inspire men with beneficence, is to throw oil into a fire in order to extinguish it.

To diminish the ferocity of mankind, and make

them more social, they must be first rendered indifferent to the various forms of worship. Had the Spaniards been less superstitious, they would have been less barbarous to the Americans.

Let us refer to king James. That prince was a bigot, and a connoisseur in these matters. He did not believe in the humanity of priests. "It is very difficult, "says he, to be at the same time a good theologian "and a good subject."

There are, in every country, a great many sound believers, and but few virtuous men. Why? Because religion is not virtue. All belief, and all speculative opinions, have not commonly any influence on the conduct (1) and probity of man*.

The dogma of fatality, is almost the general opinion of the East: it was that of the Stoics. What they call liberty, or a power to deliberate, is, they say, nothing more in man, than a successive sensation of fear, or hope, when he is to undertake something on which his happiness or misery depends. Deliberation is therefore always in us a necessary effect of our hatred for pain, and love of pleasure (2). On this subject, consult the theologians. Such a dogma, they will say, is destructive of all virtue. The Stoics, how-

* A celebrated author, in shewing the inutility of Popish preaching, has fully proved the inutility of that religion.

ever,

ever, were not less virtuous than the philosophers of other sects: nor are the Mahometan princes less faithful to their treaties than the Catholic; nor the fatalist Persian less honest in his commerce than the French or Portuguese Christian. Purity of manners is, therefore, independent of purity of doctrines.

The Pagan religion, with regard to its morality, was founded, like every other, on what is called the law of nature. With regard to its theological, or mythological part, it was not very edifying. We cannot read the history of Jupiter and his loves, and especially the treatment of his father Saturn, without allowing, that the Gods did not preach virtue by example. Yet Greece, and ancient Rome, abounded in heroes and virtuous citizens; while modern Greece, and new Rome, produce, like Brazil and Mexico, none but vile, slothful wretches, without talents, virtue, or industry.

Now, if since the establishment of Christianity in the monarchies of Europe, the sovereigns have not been either more valiant or intelligent; if the people have not had more knowledge or humanity: if the number of patriots has not been in any degree augmented; of what use then are religions? Under what pretence does the magistrate torment the unbeliever (3), and cut the throat of the heretic (4)? Why place so much importance in the belief of certain revelations, that are always contested, and frequently very contes-

Virtue is produced by the laws and not by religion.

table; and pay so little regard to the morality of human actions?

What does the history of religions teach us? That they have every where lighted up the torch of intolerance, strewed the plains with carcases, embrued the fields with blood, burned cities, and laid waste empires; but that they have never made men better. Their goodness is the work of the laws (5).

It is the banks that contain the torrent: it is the pier of punishment and contempt, that restrains vice; and it is for the magistrate to erect that pier.

If morality, politics, and legislation, are but one and the same science, who ought to be the true doctors of morality? The priests? No; the magistrates. Religion regulates our belief, and the laws our manners and our virtues.

What is it distinguishes the Christian from the Jew, the Gueber and the Mussulman? Is it an equity, a courage, a humanity, a beneficence, particular to one and not known to the others? No; they are known by every profession of faith: let not, therefore, honesty be ever confounded with orthodoxy (6).

In every country, the orthodox is he that believes certain dogmas; and throughout the whole earth, the virtuous man, is he that does such actions as are humane, and conformable with the general interest. Now, if it be the laws (7) that determine our actions, it is they that make us good citizens (8).

It is not, therefore, by the sanctity of their worship, that

that we ought to judge of a people's virtue, and purity of manners. If we carry this inquiry further, we shall see, that a religious spirit is entirely destructive of the spirit of legislation.

CHAP. II.

A RELIGIOUS SPIRIT IS DESTRUCTIVE OF THE SPIRIT OF LEGISLATION.

OBEDIENCE to the laws is the foundation of all legislation. Obedience to the priest is the foundation of almost all religion.

If the interest of the priest could coalesce with that of the nation, religions might become the supporters of every wise and humane law. This supposition is inadmissible. The interest of the ecclesiastical body has been every where distinct from that of the public, and confined within itself. The sacerdotal government, from that of the Jews to that of the Pope, has constantly debased the nation in which it has been established. The clergy would be every where independent of the magistracy, and in consequence there has been in almost all nations two authorities, both supreme and destructive of each other.

A religious spirit incompatible with the spirit of legislation.

An idle body is ambitious; it would be rich and powerful, and cannot become so but by depriving the magistrates of their authority*, and the people of their property.

The priests, to appropriate these, found their religion on revelation, and declare themselves the interpreter of that revelation. When any one is the interpreter of a law, he changes it at his pleasure, and at length becomes the author of it. From the time the priests charged themselves with announcing the decrees of heaven, they were no longer men, but divinities. It is in them, and not in God, that men believe. They can in his name command the violation of every law contrary to their interest, and the destruction of every authority that rebels against their decisions.

A religious spirit has, for this reason, been constantly incompatible with a legislative † spirit, and the priest always the enemy of the magistrate. The first

* At the time of the projected destruction of the parliaments of France, what indecent joy did not the priests of Paris discover! Let the magistrates of every nation see, in that joy, the hatred which the spiritual power bears against the temporal. If the priesthood sometimes appears to respect a king, it is when he is brought into subjection by it, and when through him they command the laws.

† Does the interest of the priest change; his religious principles change also. How often have the interpreters of revelation metamorphosed virtue into vice, and vice into virtue! They have beatified the assassin of a king. With what confidence, therefore, instituted

instituted the canonical laws, and the other the political laws. The spirit of domination and falsehood presided at the construction of the first, and they have been fatal to the universe. The spirit of justice and truth presided, more or less, at the construction of the other; and they have been, in consequence, more or less advantageous to nations.

If justice and truth be sisters, there can be no laws really useful, but such as are founded on a thorough knowledge of nature, and of the true interest of mankind. Every law, whose basis is falsehood (9), or some false revelation, is always detrimental. It is not on such a foundation that an intelligent man will erect the principles of equity. If the Turk permit the principles of justice and injustice to be drawn from the Koran, and will not suffer them to be taken from the Vedam, it is because, having no prejudice for the latter book, he is fearful of fixing justice on a ruinous foundation. He would not confirm their principles by false revelations (10). The evils that arise from false religions, are real; the good imaginary.

Of what use, in fact, can they be? Their precepts are either contrary, or conformable, to the law of nature, that is, to what mature reason dictates to societies for their greatest happiness.

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can the variable morality of the theologians inspire mankind? True morality, draws its principles from reason, and from a love of the public good; and such principles are always the same.

In the first case, the precepts of such religion must be rejected, as contrary to the public welfare.

In the second, they must be admitted. But then, of what use is a religion which teaches nothing that sound sense does not teach without it?

The precepts of reason, it will be said, when consecrated by revelation, will at least appear more respectable. Yes, in the first moments of fervor; for then maxims believed to be true, because they are supposed to be revealed, act more forcibly on the imagination. But that enthusiastic spirit is soon dissipated.

Of all precepts, those whose truths are demonstrable, have alone a durable command over the mind of man. A revelation merely from its being uncertain and contestable, so far from fortifying the demonstration of a moral principle, must, in time, obscure its evidence (11).

Truth and falsehood are two heterogenous beings. They never go together. Besides all men are not actuated by religion: all have not faith, but all are animated by a desire of happiness, and grasp at it where-ever the law presents it to them.

Principles that are respected because they are revealed (12), are always the least fixed. Daily interpreted by the priest, they are as variable as his interests, and almost always in contradiction with the interest of the public. Every nation for example, desires that its prince should be intelligent. The priest, on the contrary, would have him stupid. What art does he not employ for that purpose?

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Anecdote of a French prince.

There is no anecdote that better exposes the spirit of the clergy, than the following fact, so frequently repeated by the protestants.

It was under consideration, in a great kingdom, what books a young prince should be permitted to read. The council was assembled on this occasion. The confessor of the young prince presided. The Decades of Livy, with the Comments of Machiavel, the Spirit of Laws, Montaigne, Voltaire, &c. were first proposed. These works being successively rejected, the Jesuit confessor at last rose, and said, " I saw, the other day, on the table of the prince, the " catechism, and the French Cook : there are no " books that can do him less harm."

The power of the priest, like that of the courtier, always depends on the ignorance and stupidity of the monarch. There is, therefore, nothing he will not do to make him a fool, inaccessible to his subjects, and disgusted with the cares of administration.

In the time of the czar Peter, Sevach Hussein, sophy of Persia, persuaded by the vizirs, by the priests, and by his own idleness, that his dignity would not permit him to employ himself about public affairs, left them to his favourites, and was soon afterwards dethroned.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

WHAT SORT OF RELIGION WOULD BE USEFUL.

THE principle most fruitful in public calamities, is ignorance (13). It is on the perfection of the laws (14), that the virtues of the citizens depend; and on the progress of human reason that depends the perfection of the laws. To be honest (15), a man must be intelligent. Why then is the tree of knowledge still prohibited by despotism, and the priesthood? Every religion that honours poverty of understanding in man, is a dangerous religion. The pious stupidity of the papists does not render them better. What army occasions the least devastation in a country? Is it a religious army, an army of crusaders? No; the best disciplined army.

Now if discipline, a fear of the general, can suppress licentiousness in the troops, and restrain within their duty, young ferocious soldiers, who are daily accustomed to brave death in combat, what cannot the fear of the laws operate upon the timid inhabitants of cities?

It is not the anathemas of religion, but the sword of justice, that in cities disarms the assassin: it is the executioner that restrains the arm of the murderer. The

The fear of punishment more powerful than religion.

The fear of punishment, therefore, can do all in the camp (16), and in the city also. In one it renders the army obedient and brave, and in the other the citizens just and virtuous. It is not so with religions. Popery commands temperance ; yet, in what years do we see the fewest drunkards ? Is it in those when the most sermons are preached ? No ; but those in which the least wine is made. The Roman catholic religion has forbidden, at all times, theft, rapine, violation of chastity, murder, &c. and in the most religious ages, that is, the 9th, 10th, and 11th centuries Europe was peopled with robbers. What was the cause of so much violence and injustice ? The too weak barrier of the laws that were then opposed to crimes. A fine, greater or less, was the only chastisement for the greatest villainies. A certain sum was paid for the murder of a knight, a baron, a count, a legate, in short, even to the assassination of a prince, all had a fixed rate*.

Duelling was for a long time fashionable in Europe, and especially in France. Religion forbade it, yet duels were fought every day †. Luxury has since softened the manners of the French. Duelling is pu-

* See vol. 1, of Hume's History of England.

† Every crime not punished by the law, is daily committed. What stronger proof can there be of the inutility of religions ?

nished

nished with death. The delinquents, are, at least, almost all obliged to fly their country. There is no longer any duelling.

Whence arises the present security of Paris? From the devotion of its inhabitants? No: but from the regularity and vigilance of the police (17). The Parisians of the last age were more devout, and greater thieves. Virtue, therefore, is the work of the laws*, and not of religion. As a proof of which, I cite the little influence of our faith on our practice.

CHAP. IV.

OF THE RELIGION OF THE PAPISTS.

More consistency in the minds of men would render the popish religion more detrimental to a state. If, in this religion, celibacy be esteemed the state most perfect and most pleasing to heaven †, there could be

* When a public fête is given, and badly regulated, there are many robberies; when it is well regulated, there are none. In these two cases, a good or bad police, renders the same men honest or rogues.

† It is to the imperfection and inconsistency of men, that the

no

no believer, if he were consistent, who would not live unmarried.

In this religion, if there be many called and few chosen, every tender mother ought to murder her children as soon as they are baptized, that they may the sooner and the more certainly enjoy eternal happiness.

In this religion, which do the preachers say, is the death to be feared? An unforeseen death. Which is to be desired? That for which men are prepared. Where is that death to be found? On the scaffold. But that supposes a crime: a crime must therefore be committed*.

In this religion, what use should be made of money? It should be given to the monks, that they may release souls, by their prayers and their masses, from purgatory.

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world owes its duration. A sort of secret incredulity frequently opposes the pernicious effects of religious principles. It is with the ecclesiastical laws as with commercial regulations, if they be bad, it is to the indocility of the merchants that the state owes its riches; their obedience would ruin it.

* A fact of this sort happened a few years since in Prussia. A soldier, as he came from hearing a sermon on unforeseen death, killed a child. Wretch! they cried, how camest thou to commit this crime? From a desire of going to heaven, he replied. For this murder I shall be sent to prison, from the prison to the scaffold, and from the scaffold to heaven. The king being informed of this fact, forbade the ministers to preach any more sermons of that sort, or even to attend criminals at their execution.

When a wretch is chained to a pile of faggots, that is going to be lighted, who would not give his purse to relieve the unhappy man? Who would not feel himself compelled to this act by an involuntary commiseration? Do we owe less to the souls that are destined to remain in flames for many ages?

A true Roman Catholic ought therefore to reproach himself with every expence in luxury and superfluities. He ought to live on bread, water, and pulse. But the bishop himself feasts on rich food, drinks excellent wine, and rides in his coach*. Most of the Papists wear laced cloaths, and spend more in hounds, horses, and equipages, than in masses. This is the consequence of their inconsistency with their belief. On the supposition of a purgatory, he that gives alms to the poor, makes a bad use of his money; for it is not to the living, but the dead, he should give it, as it is to them most necessary.

Formerly, more sensible of the misfortunes of the dead, more legacies were left to the ecclesiastics. Men did not die without giving them a part of their pro-

* The present indifference of the bishops about purgatory, makes it suspected that they are not themselves well convinced of the existence of a place they have never seen. Men are moreover astonished that a soul should remain there a longer or shorter time, according to the number of six-penny pieces that are given to say masses, and that money should be more useful in the other world than in this.

perty.

perty. They did not indeed make this sacrifice, till they were bereft of all health to enjoy pleasure, or intellects to defend themselves against monastic insinuations. The monks were moreover dreaded, and perhaps they gave more from a fear of the monk than a love of souls. Without this fear, the belief of purgatory would never have so much enriched the church. The conduct of men and of nations is therefore rarely consistent with their belief, or even their speculative principles. These principles are almost always fruitless.

If I should establish the most absurd opinion, and from which the most detestable consequences might be drawn, if I make no alteration in the laws, I should make no change in the manners of a people. It is not a false maxim in morality that will render me wicked*, but the interest I have to be so.

I shall become wicked, if the laws detach my interest from that of the public; if I cannot find my happiness but in the misery of another †; and if by the

* In morality, says Machiavel, whatever absurd opinion we advance, we do not thereby injure society, provided we do not maintain that opinion by force. In every sort of science, it is by exhausting the errors, that we come at last to the spring of truth. In morality, the thing really useful, is the inquiry after truth, and the non-inquiry that is really detrimental. He that extols ignorance is a knave that would make dupes.

† Man is the enemy, the murderer of almost all animals. Why? Because his subsistence depends on their destruction.

form of government crimes are rewarded, virtue neglected, and vice elevated to the post of highest eminenee.

Interest is the produetive cause of virtue and viee. It is not the erroneous opinion of a writer, that can increase the number of robbers in an empire. The doctrine of the Jesuits favoured robbery; that doetrine was condemned by the magistrates; deceney required it: but they did not find that their doetrine had increased the number of robbers. Why? Because it had not changed the laws; because the police remained equally vigilant; because they inflicted the same punishment on the guilty, and exeept in the case of a famine, a revolution, or a similar event, the same laws must in all times produee nearly the same number of robbers.

Suppose we would increase the number of thieves, what must be done?

Augment the taxes, and the wants of the people.

Oblige every tradesman to travel with a purse of gold.

Place fewer patroles on the highways.

And lastly, abolish the punishment for robbery.

We should then soon see impunity multiply transgressions.

It is not, therefore, on the truth of a revelation, or the purity of a worship, but solely on the sagacity or absurdity of the laws, that the virtues or vices of the

 citizens

citizens depend*. The religion truly useful, is that which obliges men to instruct themselves. Which are the most perfect governments? Those whose subjects are the most intelligent. The government of the Jesuits is the most proper of all others to demonstrate this truth. It is, of its kind, a master-piece of the human mind. Let us examine their constitutions; we shall thereby more clearly see the power that legislation has on mankind.

* Plato doubtless perceived this truth, when he said, "The "time when cities and citizens shall be delivered from their evils, "will be that, when philosophy and power being united in the "same man, shall render virtue victorious over vice." M. Rousseau is not of this opinion. Let him however vaunt as much as he will, the sincerity and truth of a barbarous people, I shall not believe it on his word.

The fact is, says Hume, vol. i. of his History of England, that the Anglo-Saxons, like all other ignorant and thievish people, proclaimed their falsity and perjury with an impudence unknown to civilized nations.

It is reason, improved by experience, that alone can demonstrate to nations the interests they have to be just, humane, and faithful to their promises. Superstition does not in this case produce the effects of reason. Our devout ancestors swore to their treaties by the cross and relics, and were perjured. Modern nations do not guarantee their treaties by such oaths: they despise such useless securities.

CHAP. V.

OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE JESUITS.

I SHALL here consider the constitution of the Jesuits only, as relative to their ambitious views. The Jesuits sought credit, power, importance, and obtained them in the catholic courts.

What means did they employ for this purpose? Terror and seduction.

What rendered them formidable to princes? The union of their will with that of their general. The force of such an union is not yet perhaps sufficiently known.

Antiquity affords no model of the government of the Jesuits. Suppose we had asked of the ancients the solution of the following political problem:

" How one man, from the center of a monastry, " can rule an infinity of others, dispersed over diffe- " rent climates, and subject to different laws and sove- " reigns? How this man, often at immense distances, " can preserve an authority over his subjects, suffici- " ent to make them at his pleasure, move, act, think, " and constantly regulate their conduct by the ambiti- " ous views of their order?"

Before

Before the institution of monastic orders, this would have appeared the problem of a madman. It would have been ranked with the Platonic chimeras. This chimera, however, has been realized. With regard to the means which the general makes use of to secure the obedience of the religious, they are sufficiently known: I shall not stay to explain them.

But how, with so few subjects, does he often strike sovereigns with so much fear? That is a masterpiece of politics.

To produce this prodigy, the constitution of the Jesuits must include all that is most advantageous to monarchical and republican governments.

On the one part, promptitude and secrecy in the execution;

On the other, a lively, and habitual desire to promote the grandeur of the order.

The Jesuits for this purpose must have a despot at their head, but one that is sagacious, and consequently elective (18).

The election of this chief supposes,

The choice of a certain number of subjects;

Time and opportunity for studying the minds, the manners, the characters, and inclinations of those subjects.

To this end, it is necessary that their pupils being brought up in the colleges of the Jesuits, should be examined by the most ambitious and most discerning of the superiors;

That the election being made, the new general be closely connected with the interest of the society, and that he can have no other ;

That he must consequently be, like every other Jesuit, subject to the principal rules of the order ;

That he make the same vows ;

Be, like them, incapable of marriage ;

Have, like them, renounced all dignity, all relations, love and friendship ;

That, entirely devoted to the Jesuits, he have no regard but to the grandeur of the order, and consequently have no desire, but to increase their power ;

That the obedience of his subjects furnish him with the means ;

Lastly, the general, that he may be of the utmost utility possible to the society, must be at liberty to be guided entirely by his own genius, that his bold conceptions may not be restrained by any fear.

For this purpose his residence is placed near a king that is a priest.

He is to be attached to this sovereign in certain respects, by a bond of one common interest ; that the general participating in secret the authority of the pontiff, and living in his court, may thereby brave the vengeance of kings.

It is from thence, in fact, in the obscurity of his cell, like a spider in the center of his web, that he extends his threads over all Europe, and is by those threads informed of all that passes there.

Informed

Means by which he obtains his influence.

Informed by their confessions of the vices, the talents, the virtues, and the foibles of princes, ministers, and magistrates; he knows by what intrigue the ambition of some may be favoured, that of others opposed; this flattered, that persuaded or terrified.

While he meditates these great objects, he sees by his side monastic ambition, which holds before him the secret and awful book, in which are written the good and bad qualities of princes, their dispositions to the society, favourable or adverse. He marks with a stroke of blood, the name of kings, who, devoted to the vengeance of the order, are to be blotted out from the number of the living. If weak princes, struck with terror, thought there was no choice between obeying the commands of the general and death, their fear was not altogether panic. The government of the Jesuits justifies it in a certain degree. Does a man command a society whose members are in his hands, what a staff is in the hands of an old man? Does he speak by their mouth, and strike by their hands? The depositary of immense wealth, can he at his pleasure transport it whithersoever the interest of the order requires? Is he as despotic as the old man of the mountain, and are his subjects as submissive? Do we see them at his command expose themselves to the greatest dangers, and undertake the most hazardous enterprizes*? Such a man is doubtless to be dreaded.

* If the Jesuits have, on a thousand occasions, shown as much

The power of the Jesuits resulted from their form of government.

The Jesuits were sensible of this, and proud of the terror which their chief inspired, they thought of nothing but being secure in that formidable man. Thus, if from indolence, or any other motive, the general should betray the interest of the society, he would become the object of their contempt, and have reason to fear lest he should be their victim. Now what government or society can be named, where the head and the members have been so closely and so reciprocally united? It cannot be wonderful, therefore, that with means apparently so weak, this society has in a short time, arrived at so high a degree of power. Its power was the effect of the form of its government.

How bold soever were the principles of its morality, those principles adopted by the popes, became in a manner the principles of the Catholic church. That this dangerous morality has had few fatal effects in the hands of seculars is not surprising. It is not the reading of a Busembaum, or a La Croix, that makes regicides; it is in the ignorance and solitude of a cloister that those monsters are engendered, and it is thence that they dart forth on a prince. It is in vain that the monk in arming them with a poignard, would hide the hand from which they receive it. Nothing is more distinguishable than the crimes committed by sacer-

intrepidity as the Abyssinians, it is because among those religious, as among those formidable Africans, heaven is the reward of those who devote themselves to the orders of their chief.

dotal

dotal ambition. To prevent them, let the friend of kings and enemy of fanaticism, learn by what certain signs they may distinguish the several causes of atrocious enterprizes.

CHAP. VI.

OF THE SEVERAL CAUSES OF ATROCIOUS ENTERPRIZES.

THESE causes are the love of glory, of ambition, and fanaticism. How powerful soever these passious may be, they do not commonly equal in man the love of self-preservation and felicity. He will not brave danger and torture, or attempt any perilous enterprize, if advantage attending the success does not bear some proportion to the danger. This is a fact, that is proved by the experience of all ages.

CHAP. VII.

OF ATROCIOUS ENTERPRIZES UNDERTAKEN FROM A LOVE OF GLORY, OR OF OUR COUNTRY.

When, to rescue themselves and their country from the fetters of slavery, Dion, Pelopidas, Aratus, and Timoleon, meditated the murder of a tyrant, what were their hopes and their fears? They were in no dread of the shame and punishment of a Ravaillac. If fortune abandoned them in their enterprize, the hero, constantly supported by a powerful party, could always flatter himself with dying sword in hand. If he were successful, he became the idol of his country. The recompence, therefore, bore at least some proportion to the danger.

When Brutus followed Cæsar to the senate, he doubtless said to himself, "The name of Brutus, that "name already consecrated by the expulsion of the "Tarquins, commands me to murder the dictator, and "makes it my duty. If I succeed, I shall destroy a "despotic government, and disarm that tyranny which "is ready to pour fourth the purest blood of Rome, "which I shall save from destruction, and of which I shall "become a new founder. If I fail in my enterprize, I "shall

"shall perish by my own hands, or by those of the "enemy. The recompence therefore is adequate to "the danger."

Would the virtuous Brutus, at the time of the league, have held the same discourse? Would he have lifted his arm against his sovereign? No: what advantage would it have been to France, and what glory to himself, to have been the vile instrument of papal ambition, and the assassin of his master?

In a monarchical government there are but two motives that can induce a subject to become a regicide; the one a terrestrial, the other a celestial crown. Ambition and fanaticism can alone produce such atrocious attempts.

CHAP. VIII.

OF ATROCITIES COMMITTED FROM AMBITION.

THE enterprizes of ambition are always attempted by a man in power. To induce such a man to project them, it is necessary that when the crime is committed, the perpetrator should instantly reap the fruit of it; or if it fail, or be discovered, that he should still

still have sufficient power left to intimidate the prince, or at least gain time for flight.

Such was in Greece the situation of the generals, who, followed by their armies, marched up to the emperor, beat him in the field, or stabbed him on the throne.

Such is still at Constantinople that of the Aga or Ottoman chief, when at the head of the Janissaries, he forces the seraglio, apprehends and kills the sultan; who has often no other way to secure his throne and his life, than by the murder of his nearest relations.

The condition of the regicide almost always declares with what passion he is animated, whether by ambition or religious fanaticism.

CHAP. IX.

OF ATROCITIES COMMITTED FROM FANATICISM.

THE ambitious regicide is to be found in the class of great men only: the fanatical regicide is to be found in all, and most frequently even in the very lowest; because every man can pretend to a celestial throne

and recompence. There are also other signs by which we may distinguish these two sorts of regicides. Nothing is more different than their conduct in the same attempt.

When the first of these loses all hopes of escaping, and is on the point of being taken, he poisons or kills himself on the body of his victim. The other does not attempt his own life: his religion forbids it; that alone can restrain the arm of a man of sufficient intrepidity to undertake such a crime; that alone can make him prefer the frightful death he must undergo on a scaffold, to the easy death he might give himself on the spot.

The fanatic is an instrument of vengeance, which the monk fabricates, and employs wherever his interest directs him.

CHAP. X.

OF THE PERIOD AT WHICH THE INTEREST OF THE JESUITS COMMANDS THEM TO UNDERTAKE AN ATROCIOUS ENTERPRIZE.

When the interest of the Jesuits declines; when they expect from a new government more favour than from that which exists; when the meekness of the reigning prince

prince, and the power of the religious party at court assure them of impunity; it is then that they meditate their detestable project. They prepare the people for some great event; inspire them with perverse passions; and terrify their imaginations, either as formerly by predictions of the approaching dissolution of the world, or of a total overthrow of religion. At the time these ideas, being put in fermentation, heat the minds of men, and become the general subject of conversation, the Jesuits seek out the frantic wretch who is to aid their ambition. Villains of this sort are rare. To undertake an enterprize of this kind, a man must have a soul possessed of violent and opposite sentiments; a soul at once susceptible of the highest degree of villainy, devotion, credulity, and remorse; at once bold, prudent, impetuous, and wary. Characters of this sort are the produce of the most gloomy and inexorable passions. But how is the soul inflammable by fanaticism, to be distinguished? By what means can we discover the seeds of those passions, which, though strong, contrary, and proper to form a regicide, are always invisible before they are put in action? The tribunal of confession is the microscope by which those seeds become visible. At that tribunal (19) where the man stands naked, the right of interrogation gives the monk an opportunity of examining all the hidden recesses of his soul.

The general, apprized by the confessions, of the manners, passions, and dispositions of an infinity of penitents,

penitents, has the choice of too great a number, not to find a fit instrument for his vengeance.

The fanatic found, and the choice fixed, the only task that remains is to inflame his zeal. Enthusiasm is a contagious disorder, says lord Shaftesbury, that is communicated by the gesture, the look, the tone of the voice, &c. This the general knows: he commands, and the fanatic being taken into a house of Jesuits, there finds himself in the midst of enthusiasts. It is there that being animated by the sentiments of those who surround him, he is persuaded that he really thinks what they suggest to him, and by being familiarised with the idea of the crime he is to commit, is rendered inaccessible to remorse.

The remorse of a moment would be sufficient to disarm the hand of an assassin. There is no man so hardened as to reflect without horror on an action so atrocious, and on the punishment he is to suffer. The only way to divest him of that horror, is so to exalt in him the spirit of fanaticism, that the idea of his crime, instead of being associated in his memory with that of his punishment, may solely excite in him the ideas of those celestial pleasures that are to be the reward of his enterprize.

Of all religious orders, that of the Jesuits is at once the most powerful, intelligent, and enthusiastic; consequently there is none that can operate so strongly on the imagination of a fanatic, and none that can with less danger attempt the life of a prince. The blind

 submission

submission of the Jesuits to the orders of their general, makes them all secure in each other. Without diffidence in this respect, they therefore give an intire liberty to their thoughts.

The fear of punishment cannot damp their zeal, as they are rarely charged with committing a crime, till the time of its execution. Each Jesuit, supported by all the credit and power of the order, knows that he is secure from every inquiry, till the consummation of the attempt, and that no one will dare to be the accuser of a member of a society so formidable by its riches, by the great number of spies it keeps in pay, by the great men who are under its direction, by the citizens it protects, and who are attached to it by the indissoluble bonds of hope and fear.

The Jesuit knows moreover, that the crime being committed, nothing is more difficult than to convict the society of it; who lavishing gold and menaces, and supposing itself always calumniated, can constantly spread over the blackest crimes that obscurity so favourable to the Jesuits, who are satisfied to be suspected of great crimes, as they thereby become the more formidable; but who would not be convicted of them, as they would thereby become too odious.

By what means in fact can they be convicted? The general knows the names of all who are concerned in a grand enterprize, and can, on the first suspicion, disperse them in unknown and foreign convents; where he can, under false names, secure them from

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a common pursuit. Does the inquiry become serious? The general is always sure to render it abortive, either by concealing the accused in the recess of a cloister, or by making him a sacrifice to the interest of the order. With so many resources and with such impunity, it is not wonderful that such a society has ventured upon so much; and that encouraged by the encomiums of the order, its members have often executed the most daring enterprizes.

In the very form of jesuitical government, we see the cause of that fear and respect which its members inspire, and the reason why, since its establishment, there has been no religious war, revolution, assassination of monarchs, in China, Ethiopia, Holland, France, England, Portugal, Geneva, &c. in which the Jesuits have not had some share.

The ambition of the general, and the assistants, is the soul of the society. There are none who, more jealous of dominion have employed more means to secure it. The secular clergy are without doubt ambitious; but though animated with the same passion, they have not the same means to gratify it. They are rarely regicides.

The Jesuit is under the immediate dependence of a superior (20). It is not so with the secular priest. Mixing with the world, and diverted by his employment and his pleasures, he is not confined to a single idea. His fanaticism is not incessantly exalted by the presence of other fanatics. Besides, not having the

power

power of a religious body, if culpable, he would be punished. He is therefore less enterprising, and less formidable than the regular.

The real crime of the Jesuits was not the depravity of their morals*, but their constitution, their riches, their power, their ambition, and the incompatibility of their interest with that of the nation.

How perfect soever the legislation of these religious has been, whatever empire they have had over the people, still it will be said, these Jesuits once so formidable are now banished from France, Portugal, and Spain. True, because their vast projects were timely opposed.

In every monastic constitution there is a radical defect, which is the want of real power. That of the monks is founded on the folly and stupidity of mankind. Now the human mind must in time become enlightened, or at least change its folly. The Jesuits, who foresaw this, were in consequence desirous of uniting in their hands the temporal and spiritual powers. They were desirous to terrify princes by their armies, when they could not do it by the poignard or by poison. For this purpose they had already laid, in Paraguay and California, the foundations of new empires.

If the slumber of the magistrate had continued,

* False principles of morality are only dangerous when they become laws.

perhaps,

perhaps a century longer, it would have been impossible to oppose their designs. The union of the temporal and spiritual powers would have rendered them too formidable: they would for ever have held the catholics in blindness, and their princes in humiliation. Nothing more strongly proves the degree of authority, to which the Jesuits had already arrived, than the measures taken in France for their expulsion*.

Why did the magistracy so warmly attack their books (21)? They, doubtless, saw the insignificance of such accusation. But they saw also that it was this accusation alone, which could destroy their influence over the minds of the people. All other means would have been ineffectual.

Suppose, in fact, that the act for their banishment had contained only motives for the public good.

"Every numerous society, it would have said, is "ambitious, and only solicitous for its particular interest. Therefore, by not having any connection "with the public interest, it becomes dangerous to "society. With regard to that of the Jesuits, it would

* When terrified by the remonstrances of their parliaments, we see kings deliver themselves up to the Jesuits, we cannot avoid recollecting the fable of the young mouse. What a noisy animal I just now met! he says to his mother, they call it a cock. I shudder with fear. I should not have been able to have got hither, had it not been for the presence of a very gentle animal; it seems to be of our kind. Its name is a cat. O! my son, it is of the latter you must beware.

have

" have added, it is evident, that being by its constitu- " tion subject to a foreign despot, it cannot have an " interest conformable to that of the public*."

" The extreme extent of the commerce of the " Jesuits, may be destructive of that of the nation: " and the immense riches they gain by that com- " merce†, being transported, at the pleasure of their " general, into China, Spain, Germany, Italy, &c. " cannot but impoverish a nation."

To conclude, a society rendered conspicuous by atrocious attempts without number; a society composed of men of sobriety, who to multiply their partisans, hold out protections, credit, and riches, to their friends; persecution, calamity, and death to their enemies, is certainly a society whose projects must be at once boundless, and destructive of the general happiness.

How reasonable soever these motives may be, they

* The magistrates may without doubt apply to the Jesuits these words of Hobbes to the popish priests. " You are, he says, " a confederation of ambitious knaves. Eager to rule over the " people, you endeavour, by virtue of mysteries and nonsense, " to extinguish in them the lights of reason and of the Gospel. " To believe in the truth of a priest, says, on this subject, the poet " Lee, is to confide in the smiles of the great, in the tears of a " harlot, in the oaths of a tradesman, and in the grief of an heir."

† The riches of the Jesuits are immense, they sow not, neither do they dig, and yet, says Shakespeare, it is they that gather all the fruits of the earth. They even press out the very juice of poverty.

would

would have made but little impression, and the powerful and proteeted order of the Jesuits would never have been sacrifieed to reason, and the public good.

CHAP XI.

JANSENISM ALONE COULD DESTROY THE JESUITS.

To attack the Jesuits with advantage, what should be done? Oppose passion to passion, sect to sect, fanaticism to fanaticism. The Jansenists should be armed against them. Now, the Jansenists insensible, from devotion (22) or stupidity, to the misfortunes of their fellows, would never have opposed the Jesuits, if they had regarded them only as enemies of the public. The magistrates were sensible of this, and knew that to animate them against the Jesuits, their imaginations must be heated, and that by such a book as the Assertions, their ears must be incessantly filled with the words lewdness, the sin of philosophy, magic, astrology, idolatry, &c.

The magistrates have been reproached with these Assertions. They have, it is said, degraded their character and their dignity, by presenting themselves to

the public under the form of controversialists (23). Doubtless, neither princes nor magistrates ought to follow the vile profession of sophists and theologians. The disputes of the schools contract the mind, and are incompatible with the grand views of administration (24).

If these matters be treated with too much importance they announce the greatest evils. They presage a new St. Bartholomew's day. The golden age of a nation is not that of controversies. However, if at the the time of the affair of the Jesuits, the magistrates of France had but little credit and authority: if the situation of the parliaments, with regard to the Jesuits, was such, that they could not serve the public but under pretexts, and for reasons different from those that really determined them; why should they not make use of them, and profit by the contempt into which the books and the morals of the Jesuits were fallen, to deliver France from monks, who had become so formidable by their power, their intrigues, their riches, their ambition (25), and above all, by their constitution, which furnish them with means to enslave the minds of men?

The real crime of the Jesuits was the excellence of their government; that excellence was every where destructive of the public happiness.

It must be confessed that the Jesuits have been one of the most cruel scourges of nations; but without them we should never have perfectly known what a body

body of laws directed to one end was capable of operating on men.

What did the Jesuits pursue? The power and riches of their order. Now, no legislation with so few means, has better accomplished that grand object. If an example of a government so perfect is not to be found among any people, the reason is, because in its establishment it is necessary to have, like Romulus, a new empire to found.

Now mankind are rarely in that situation, and in any other, perhaps, it is impossible to form so perfect a legislation.

CHAP. XII.

EXAMINATION OF THIS TRUTH.

WHEN a man establishes new laws in an empire, it is either in quality of a magistrate appointed by the people to correct the ancient legislation, or in quality of victor, that is, by right of conquest. Such were the different positions in which were Solon on the one part, Alexander and Tamerlane on the other.

In the first of these positions the magistrate, as Solon lamented, is forced to conform to the manners and tastes of those that employ him. They do not require

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an excellent legislation: it would be too discordant with their manners and their tastes. They simply require the correction of some abuses that have crept into their present form of government: the magistrate consequently cannot give full scope to his genius. He cannot attempt a grand plan, or the establishment of a perfect government.

In the second of these positions, what does the conqueror at first propose? To establish his authority over nations impoverished, exhausted by war, and still irritated by their defeat. If he impose some of the laws of his own country, he also adopts a part of theirs. The evils that result from a mixture of laws, often contradictory to each other, concern him little.

It is not immediately after conquest that the victor can conceive the vast project of a perfect legislation. The still uncertain possessor of a new crown, the only matter he then requires of his new subjects, is their submission: and when will he concern himself about their felicity?

There is no muse to whom a temple has not been erected: no science that has not been cultivated in some academy: no academy where some prize has not been proposed for the solution of certain problems in mechanics, agriculture, optics, astronomy, &c. By what fatality have the sciences of morality and politics, without dispute the most important of all, and that contribute the most to the national felicity, been hitherto without public schools?

What

Obstacles which impede the adoption of good laws.

What proof more striking of the indifferenee of men for the happiness of their fellow creatures (26)?

Why have not people in power already instituted aeademies of morality and politics? Do they fear that such aeademies should at last resolve the problem of an exeellent legislation, and secure the perpetual felicity of the people? They would doubtless fear it, if they suspect that the publie felieity required a saerifice of the least part of their authority. There is but one interest that does not oppose the national interest, which is that of the weak. The prinee eommonly sees nothing in nature but himself. What interest can he have in the felieity of his subjeets? Can he love them when he loads them with fetters? Is it from the car of vietory, and the throne of despotism, that he ean give them useful laws? Intoxicated with sueeess, what eares a conqueror about the felicity of his slaves?

With regard to the magistrate eharged by a republic with the reformation of its laws, he has usually too many different interests to manage, and too many different opinions to reeoncile, to effect any thing great and simple of this nature. It falls to the lot of none but the founder of a eolony, who commands men as yet without prejudiees and habits, to resolve the problem of an excellent legislation. Nothing in this situation can impede the progress of his genius, or oppose the establishment of the most sagaeious laws. Their perfection can have no bounds but those of his capacity.

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But why are the monastic laws, with regard to the object which they propose, the least imperfect of all others? Because the founder of a religious order, is in the same situation as the founder of a colony.

Ignatius, when forming in silence and solitude the plan of his order, was not impeded by the tastes and opinions of his future subjects. His regulations made, and his order established, he was surrounded by novices, the more submissive to his rules as they embraced them voluntarily, and consequently approved the rules they were bound to observe. Can it then be surprising, that such regulations are more perfect in their kind, than those of any nation?

Of all studies, that of the several monastic constitutions is perhaps the most curious and most instructive for magistrates, philosophers, and statesmen in general. They are experiments in miniature, which by disclosing the secret causes of the felicity, grandeur, and power of the several religious orders, prove, as I proposed to show, that it is not on religion, nor on what is called morality, nearly the same among all nations and all monks, but on legislation alone, that the vices, the virtues, the power, and felicity of a people depend.

The laws are the soul of an empire, the instruments of public felicity. These instruments at first rude, may every day be more improved. But to what degree may they be improved, and how far may the excellence of a legislation increase the happiness of a people

people* ? To resolve this question, we must first know wherein consists the happiness of individuals.

* Among the different religious orders, those whose government approaches the nearest to the form of a republic, and whose subjects are the most free and most happy, are in general those whose manners are the best, and whose morals are the least erroneous. Such are the Doctrinarians and the Oratorians.

NOTES.

NOTES.

1. (page 146.) ALL the French boast of being affectionate friends. When the Treatise on the Mind appeared, they railed loudly against the chapter on friendship. One would have thought Paris was peopled with Orestes and Pylades. It is in this nation, however, that the military law obliges a soldier to shoot his companion and his friend who is a deserter. The establishment of such a law does not prove a great respect for friendship in the government; nor the obedience to it, a great tenderness for their friends among the people.

2. (ibid.) Whoever, say the Stoics, desires to injure himself, and without motives should throw himself into the fire, the sea, or out of a window, would be justly thought a madman, for in his natural state man pursues pleasure and shuns pain, and in all his actions is necessarily determined by a desire of happiness, real or apparent. Man, therefore, is not free. His will is as necessarily the effect of his ideas, and consequently of his sensations, as pain is the effect of a blow. Besides, add the Stoics, is there a single instant when the liberty of man can be referred to the different operations of the same mind?

If, for example, the same thing cannot, at the same instant, be and not be, it is not therefore possible

That at the moment the mind acts, it could act otherwise;
That at the moment it chuses, it could chuse otherwise;
That at the moment it deliberates, it could deliberate otherwise;
That at the moment it wills, it could will otherwise.

Now

NOTES ON SECTION VII.

Now if it be my will, such as it is, that makes me deliberate; if my deliberation, such as it is, makes me chuse; if my choice, such as it is, makes me act; and if when I deliberated, it was not possible for me (considering the love I have for myself) not to deliberate; it is evident that liberty does not consist in the actual violation, nor in the actual deliberation, nor in the actual choice, nor in the actual action, and, in short, that liberty does not relate to any of the operations of the mind.

If that were the case, the same thing, as I have already said, must be and not be, at the same instant. Now, add the Stoics, this is the question we ask the philosophers: "Can the mind be "free, if when it wills, when it deliberates, and when it chuses, it "is not free?"

3. (p. 147.) There is scarcely any saint who has not, once in his life, dipped his hands in human blood, and put his man to death. The bishop who so earnestly solicited the death of a young man of Abbeville, was a saint. He would have the youth expiate, in horrid torments, the crime of having sung some licentious couplets.

4. (ibid.) If we massacre the heretics, say the bigots, it is from pity. We would only make them feel the goad of charity. We hope, by the fear of death and the executioner, to save them from hell. But how long has charity had a goad? How long has it cut men's throats? Besides, if vices as well as errors are damnable, why do not these devotees massacre the vicious of their own sect?

5. (p. 148.) It is hunger, it is want, that makes the people industrious, and wise laws that make them good. If the ancient Romans, says Machiavel, gave examples of every sort of virtue; if honesty were customary among them; if in the course of several ages, there were scarcely six or seven condemned to penalty, exile, or death; to what did they owe their virtues and their success? To the wisdom of their laws, and to the first dissensions that arose between the plebeians and patricians, which established the equilibrium of power, that, by means of other dissensions which

NOTES ON SECTION VII.

which continually arose, was maintained a long time between those two bodies.

If the Romans, adds that illustrious writer, differing in all things from the Venetians, were neither humble in adversity, nor presumptuous in prosperity, the different conduct and character of those two people was the effect of the difference in their discipline.

6. (p. 148.) M. Helvetius was treated by some theologians as impious, and father Bertier was a saint. Yet the former did not, and would not injure any one; and the other said publicly that if he were king, he would have drowned the president Montesquieu in his own blood.

The one of these was an honest man, and the other a Christian.

7. (ibid.) Just laws are all-powerful over men, command their wills, render them honest, humane, and happy. It is to four or five laws of this sort that the English owe their happiness, and the security of their property and liberty.

The first of these laws is that which gives the house of Commons the power of fixing the Subsidies.

The second is the act of Habeas Corpus.

The third is the Trial by Jury.

The fourth, the Liberty of the Press.

The fifth, the Manner of levying the Taxes.

But are not these taxes now a load to the nation? If they be they at least do not furnish the prince with means of oppressing individuals.

[This will certainly be disputed. The more numerous the taxes, the greater the legion of tax-gatherers, who are always in immediate subjection to the king or his minister, and have frequent opportunities of oppressing the people. T.]

8. (ibid.) It is not to religion or to that innate law, engraved, as they say, on every mind, that men owe their social virtues. This so much boasted natural law is like other laws, nothing more than the produce of experience, reflection, and judgment. If nature had impressed clear ideas of virtue on the heart, if these

deas

ideas had not been an acquisition, would men have formerly sacrificed human victims to gods whom they called good? Would the Carthaginians, to render Saturn propitious, have sacrificed their children on his altars? Would the Spaniard believe that the Divinity thirsted for the blood of a Jew, or a heretic? Would whole nations flatter themselves with obtaining the favour of heaven, either by the punishment of the man who thinks as their priests direct, or by the murder of a virgin, offered as an expiation for their crimes?

But suppose that the principles of the law of nature be innate: mankind must then be sensible that punishments, like crimes should be personal, and that cruelty and injustice cannot be the priests of God. Now if ideas of equity so clear and simple are not yet adopted by all nations, it is not then to religion, or to the natural law, but to instruction, that man owes his knowledge of justice and virtue.

9. (p. 151.) Virtue is so precious, and its practice so connected with national prosperity, that if virtue were an error, we doubtless ought to sacrifice to it every thing and even truth itself. But why this sacrifice, and why must falsehood be the father of virtue? Wherever private interest is confounded with that of the public, virtue becomes in every individual the necessary effect of self-love, and personal interest.

All the vices of a nation may constantly be referred to some vices in the legislation. Why are there so few honest men? Because misfortune pursues probity almost every where. If on the contrary honours and importance were its companions, all men would be virtuous. But there are secret crimes, to which religion alone can be opposed. Of these the embezzlement of a deposit is an example. But does experience prove that a deposit can be more safely confided to a priest than to Ninon de l'Enclos? Under the title of pious legacies, how many robberies are committed, how many lawful heirs are deprived of their estates! Such is the corrupt source of the immense riches of the church. These

are

are its robberies. Where are its restitutions? If the monk, it will be said, does not restore himself, he makes others restore. What may be the amount of these restitutions in a large kingdom? A hundred thousand crowns. Be it so. Now, compare this sum with that required for the maintenance of so many convents, and then judge of their utility. What would be said of a financier, who to secure the receipt of one million should expend twenty in collecting it? He would be regarded as a fool. The public is the fool, when it maintains so many priests.

Their too costly instructions, are besides, useless to a people in easy circumstances, active, industrious, and whose character is elevated by liberty. Among such a people, there are few secret crimes committed.

Can men be still ignorant, that it is to the union of public and private interest, that the inhabitants owe their patriotic or national virtues? Will they for ever found it on errors and pretended revelations, that have for so long a time served as a cloak for the greatest crimes?

10. (p. 151.) If all men be born slaves to superstition, why not make use of their weakness, it will be said, to inspire them with respect for the laws, and render them happy? Is it the superstitious who respect the laws? On the contrary, it is they that violate them. Superstition is a polluted source, whence issue all the evils and calamities of the earth. Cannot this source be exhausted? Doubtless it may. The people are not so necessarily superstitious as is imagined. They are what government makes them. Under a prince that is enlightened, they soon become so likewise. The monarch is at length more powerful than the gods. For which reason the first care of the priests is to gain possession of the mind of the prince: there are no flatteries so vile, that they will not descend to. Must they maintain his divine right? They are ready to do it; but on a tacit condition, that he shall be really theirs. If he cease to be theirs, the clergy change their tone, and if circumstances be favourable, they declare that if in Saul,

Samuel

NOTES ON SECTION VII.

Samuel deposed the Lord's anointed, Samuel could do nothing then, that the pope cannot do now.

11. (p. 152.) An honest man will always obey his reason in preference to revelation; for it is, he will say, more certain that God is the author of human reason, that is of the faculty in man of distinguishing the true from the false, than that he is the author of any particular book. (That God, as the author of man, is the author of human reason is very certain; but can it be more certain, than that he is the author of a revelation, which bears unquestionable marks of a divine original. T.)

It is more criminal in the eyes of a wise man to deny our own reason, than to deny any revelation whatever? (For by denying the latter, we are led to enquire after its proofs, which, if it be of divine original, will be irresistible. T.)

12. (ibid.) The religious system *(of the Roman Catholics)* destroys all proportion between the rewards decreed for the actions of men, and the utility of those actions to the public. For what reason, in fact, is the soldier less respected than the monk? Why do they give to a religious who takes the vow of poverty twelve or fifteen thousand livres per annum, to hear, once a year, the crimes or follies of a great man, and refuse six hundred livres to an officer wounded in an assault?

13. (p. 154.) Almost all religions forbid men the use of their reason, and render them at once brutes, wretched and cruel. This truth is represented pleasantly enough in an English piece, intituled, *The Queen of Good Sense.* The favourites of the queen are in that piece Law, Physic, and a Priest of the Sun, named Firebrand.

These favourites, weary of a government contrary to their interests, call in Ignorance to their aid. He lands in the island of Good Sense, at the head of a company of fidlers, buffoons, monkeys, &c. followed by a crowd of Italians and Frenchmen. The queen of Good Sense goes forth to meet them. Firebrand stops her: O queen, he cries, thy throne is shaken: the gods arm

against

NOTES ON SECTION VII.

against thee : their wrath is the fatal effect of thy protecting infidels. It is by my mouth the Sun speaks to thee : tremble, and deliver those impious wretches over to me, that I may consign them to the flames ; or heaven will accomplish its vengeance on thee. I am a priest ; I am infallible ; I command ; do thou obey lest I should curse the day of thy birth, as a day fatal to religion. The queen, without making any reply, ordered the trumpets to sound the charge ; she is abandoned by her army, and flies into a wood. Firebrand follows and stabs her there. My interest and my religion demand, says he, this grand victim. But shall I declare myself the assassin ? No : interest that commanded me to commit this murder, will have me conceal it. I will deplore my enemy in public, and celebrate her virtues. He said. A sound of war was heard. Ignorance appeared, caused the body of Good Sense to be taken up, and deposited in a monument, from whence a voice issued that pronounced these prophetic words : " Let the " shadow of Good Sense wander for ever upon the earth, and let " her groans be an eternal terror to the army of Ignorance : let " her shade be visible only to discerning men, and let them in " consequence be always treated as visionaries."

14. (p. 154.) The laws are the public lights that show the people the path of virtue. What should be done to render these laws respectable ? It must be shown that they evidently tend to the public utility, and be examined a long time before they are promulgated.

The laws of the Twelve Tables were wholly exposed to the examination of the public. By such conduct magistrates prove their sincere desire to establish good laws.

Every tribunal, that at the desire of persons in power, easily inflicts the punishment of death on the citizens, renders the legislation odious, and the magistracy contemptible.

15. (ibid.) There are four things, say the Jews, that must destroy the world, one of which is a man that is religious and a fool.

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NOTES ON SECTION VII.

16. (p. 155.) Every man fears pain and death. Even the soldier obeys this fear and is disciplined by it.

He who fears nothing will do nothing against his inclination. It is in quality of cowards that troops are brave. Now said a great prince on this subject, if the executioner can effect any thing at all in an army, he may do the same in a city.

17. (p. 156.) If the police necessary to suppress vice be too chargeable, it is a public calamity. If it be too inquisitive, it corrupts the manners, by extending a prying treacherous spirit, and thereby becomes a public calamity. The police should not moreover execute the vengeance of the strong against the weak, nor imprison a citizen without a juridical process against him. It ought likewise to watch incessantly over itself. Without the greatest vigilance, its officers, becoming authorized malefactors, will be the more dangerous, as their numerous and secret crimes will remain unknown as well as unpunished.

18. (p. 163.) It is not with a despotic Jesuit as with an Eastern tyrant, who followed by a troop of banditti, to which he gives the name of an army, plunders and ravages his empire. The jesuitical despot is himself subject to the rules of his order, and animated by the same spirit, derives all his importance from the power of his subjects. His despotism therefore cannot be detrimental to them.

19. (p. 172.) If there have been but few regicides among the Protestants, it is because they do not kneel before the priest, but confess themselves to God, and not to man. It is not so with the Catholics. They almost all confess, and commonly before they commit their atrocious crimes.

20. (p. 175.) The obedience of the monk to his superior always renders the latter formidable. Does he order him to murder? The murder is executed. What monk can resist his commands? How many means has the superior to make him obey? To know this, let us run over the rules of the Capuchins. Clemens Papa IV. as above, cap. vi. sect. 24, says, "A brother has no right to "confess but to another brother, unless in case of absolute necessity."

NOTES ON SECTION VII.

"cessity." It says, ubi supra, cap. vi. sect 8. "If in prison a "brother overloaded with the weight of his fetters, require to con-"fess to a religious of the order, he shall not obtain his request, "unless the guardian shall judge it proper to grant him that fa-"vour and consolation. The religious cannot communicate at "Easter, except by the permission of the superior, and always in "the infirmary, or other secret place."

He adds as above, cap. vi. sect. 10. "For great crimes, the "brothers shall be burned alive. For other crimes they shall be "stripped, and when naked they shall be bound to a stake, and "flogged without mercy, three different times, at the option of "the father priest. They shall have by measure only the bread "of affliction, and the water of grief. For atrocious crimes the "father priest may invent such sort of torment as he shall think "proper."

It is said, as above, cap. vi. sect. 2. "If fetters, fire, scourges, "thirst, imprisonment, and the refusal of the sacraments, are not "sufficient punishments for a brother, he shall be made to confess "the crime of which he is accused, and the father priest shall in-"vent such sort of punishment as he thinks fit, without telling who "are the accusers and the witnesses; unless it be a religious of "great importance: for it would be indecent to put to the torture "(except in case of an enormous crime) a father who has in other "respects deserved well of the order."

Lastly, it is added, as above, cap. vi. sect. 3. "The brother "who shall have recourse to a secular tribunal, such as that of a "bishop, shall be punished at the pleasure of the general or pro-"vincial, and the brother who shall confess his sin, or shall be "convicted of it, shall be punished by form of provision, not-"withstanding an appeal, except to do justice hereafter, in case "the appeal be well founded."

Such rules being laid down, there is no monk that the pope, the church, and the general, cannot make a regicide. There are no superiors on whom a prince ought to confer such power over his

NOTES ON SECTION VII.

his inferiors. By what infatuation can he thus expose innocence to the most cruel punishments, and himself to so many dangers.

21. (p. 177.) Among the works of the Jesuits there are certainly many that are ridiculous and rash. Father Garasse, for example, declaiming against Cain, says, lib. ii. p. 130. of his curious Doctrine, "That Cain, as the Hebrews remark, was a man of little "sense, and the first atheist. That this Cain could not compre-"hend what his father Adam said, that is, that there was a holy "God, the judge of our actions. Not being able to understand "this, Cain imagined it was an old man's tale, and that his father "had lost his senses, when he related the fact of going out of the "terrestrial paradise, and what followed. Hence it happened that "Cain put himself into a passion, killed his brother, and talked to "God as if he had been talking to a blackguard."

The same father, lib. i. p. 97. "Relates, that on the arrival of "Calvin, in Poitou, when almost all the nobility embraced his er-"rors, a gentleman retained a part of the nobility in the Catholic "faith, by saying, "I would undertake to establish a better reli-"gion than that of Calvin, if I could find a dozen scoundrels, who "were not afraid to be burned in defence of my notions." Fontenelle was persecuted for having repeated in his oracles, what father Garasse made the gentleman of Poitou say, so true it is, that there is nothing but good luck and bad luck in this world.

22. (p. 179.) All things, even the pedantic Jansenists, concur in preventing the present education in France, from forming citizens and patriots. Why, therefore, always occupied with their versatile or arrogant grace, have they not yet proposed any new plan of public education. With what indifference do the sanctified regard the interest of the public!

23. (p. 180.) The book of Assertions, said the partisans of the Jesuits, was worthy of an Hibernian theologian, but not of a parliament. The Jesuits, they add, were therefore not judged by the magistrates, but by attornies of the Jansenists. This however I know, that the dissolution of that society was in part owing

to that book. So true it is, that the most happy reformations are sometimes brought about by the most ridiculous means.

24. (p. 180). In almost every country, whoever would obtain an employ, should be of the religion of the people. China, is said to be almost the only country where they see the absurdity of this custom. To be a just historian, a man should, say the Chinese, be indifferent to all religions. To govern mankind in an equitable manner, to be a magistrate of integrity, a mandarin void of prejudice; he must in like manner be of no particular sect.]

25. (ibid.) Pons de Thiard de Bissy, bishop of Chalons sur Saone (the only one in the states of Blois), in 1558, who remained faithful to Henry III. addressed a letter to the parliament of Dijon. In this letter, dated in 1590, this prelate first deplores the misfortunes of his distracted country; he described the horrors of the league, and its abominable crimes. He asserts that God in his wrath would destroy that fine kingdom, *which impostors in iron masks had shaken in every part.* Then addressing himself to the parliament, he thus exhorts them to expel the Jesuits.

"These apostles of Mahomet, have, says he, the impiety to "preach, that war is the method of God; let these diabolical se-"ducers, these presumptuous lovers of false wisdom, these hy-"pocritical zealots, these whited walls, these inflamers of men's "minds, these firebrands of sedition, these incendiaries of Spain, "these dangerous spies, and artful contrivers of ambushes, be "for ever banished from France."

Then addressing himself to the Jesuit Charles, and his brethren, he says, "You see all these execrable facts committed, that make "honest men groan, and you do not oppose them by the least "sign of disapprobation: you even domore, you applaud them, "and promise celestial rewards to the greatest crimes. You ex-"cite men to commit them; and place in heaven infamous vil-"lains, whom you wash in the dew of your mercy."

"The most Christian king has been lately assassinated by the "atrocious act of your fellows, and you sacrifice him again after

his

"his death. You consign him to eternal flames; and you dare to "preach, that we ought to refuse him the aid of our prayers."

26. (p. 183.) O! mortals, who call yourselves good, and who have in fact so little goodness, will you never blush at your indifference for the reformation and perfection of the laws! Do not the magistrates know how to govern and restrain you, but by the fear of the most abominable punishments? Insensible to the cries and groans of the sufferers, will they never attempt to suppress crimes by more gentle methods? It is time that they prove their humanity, by investigating other means. Let them therefore publish their reflections on this subject. Let them fear, lest the murder of so many unfortunate men, should be imputed to the idleness of their minds, and let them propose a premium for the solution of a problem, so worthy of the compassionate equity of a sovereign. O! mortals, your pretended goodness is nothing but hypocrisy. It is in your words, and not in your actions.

SECTION VIII.

OF WHAT CONSTITUTES THE HAPPINESS OF INDIVIDUALS, OR THE BASIS ON WHICH WE SHOULD FOUND NATIONAL FELICITY, NECESSARILY COMPOSED OF THE FELICITY OF ALL THE INDIVIDUALS.

CHAP. I.

WHETHER MEN, IN THE STATE OF SOCIETY, CAN BE ALL EQUALLY HAPPY?

THERE is no society in which all the members can be equally rich and powerful (1). Is there any in which they can be equally happy? This is what we shall now examine.

Sagacious laws may without doubt produce the prodigy of universal felicity. When every citizen has some property, is in a certain degree of ease, and can, by seven or eight hours labour, abundantly supply his own wants, and those of his family; they are then all as happy as they can be.

Demonstration of that truth

To prove this truth, let us consider in what the happiness of an individual consists. This preliminary knowledge is the sole basis on which we can establish the national felicity.

A nation is the assemblage of all the inhabitants of a country, and the public happiness is composed of that of all the individuals. Now, what constitutes the happiness of an individual? Perhaps it is still unknown, and men have not sufficiently employed themselves in the examination of a question, which however may throw the greatest light on the several parts of administration.

If we ask the majority of mankind, they will say, that to be equally happy, all should be equally rich and powerful. Nothing more false than this assertion. In fact, if life be nothing more than an aggregate of an infinity of separate instants, all men would be equally happy, if they could all fill up those instants in a manner equally agreeable. Is that to be done in different situations? Is it possible to colour all the moments of human life with the same tint of felicity? To resolve this question, let us see in what different occupations the several parts of the day are necessarily consumed.

CHAP. II.

OF THE EMPLOYMENT OF TIME.

MEN hunger and thirst; they require to lie with their wives, to sleep, &c. Of the twenty-four hours of the day, they employ ten or twelve in providing for these several wants. As soon as they are gratified, from the dealer in rabbits' skins, to the monarch, all are equally happy.

It is in vain to say that the table of wealth is more delicate than that of mediocrity. When the labourer is well fed, he is content. The different cookery of different people proves, as I have already said, that good cheer is that to which we have been accustomed * †.

* This saying brings to my mind that of a French cook. He was in England, where he saw every thing dressed with butter sauce. What! says he, in this country where they count a hundred different religions, have they only one sauce for all their meats? France for me; there we have only one religion, but in return there is no meat that we do not eat with a hundred different sorts of sauce.

† Hear Bethel's sermons, one not vers'd in schools,
But strong in sense, and wise without the rules.

There

There are then ten or twelve hours in the day, in which all men, able to procure the necessaries of life, may be equally happy. With regard to the ten or twelve remaining hours, that is to say, those that separate* a rising want from one that is gratified, who can doubt that men do not then enjoy the same felicity, if they commonly make the same use of them, and if all devote them to labour, that is, in the acquisition of money sufficient to supply their wants? Now the postillion who rides, the carter who drives, and the clerk who engrosses, all in their several ranks propose the same end; they must therefore, in this sense, employ their time in the same manner.

But, it will be said, is it the same with the opulent idler? His riches furnish him, without labour, with all he wants. I allow it. But is he therefore more happy? No. Nature does not multiply in his favour the wants of hunger, love, &c. But does not the opulent man fill up in a manner more agreeable the inter-

Go work, hunt, exercise, (he thus began),
Then scorn a homely dinner, if you can;
If their plain bread and milk will do the feat,
The pleasure lies in you, and not the meat.
Pope's Imitation of Horace. T

* It is in fact, on the more or less happy employment of these ten or twelve hours, that principally depend the happiness or misery of the greatest part of mankind.

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val that separates a gratified want from one that is rising? I doubt it.

The artisan is doubtless subject to labour, and so is the idle opulent man to discontent: and which of these two evils are the greatest?

If labour be generally regarded as an evil, it is because in most governments the necessaries of life are not to be had without excessive labour; whence the very idea of labour constantly excites that of pain.

Labour, however, is not pain in itself. Habit renders it easy; and when it is pursued without remarkable fatigue, is in itself an advantage. How many artisans are there who when rich still continue their occupations, and quit them not without regret, when age obliges them to it. There is nothing that habit does not render agreeable.

In the exercise of their employments, their professions, their talents, the magistrate who judges, the smith who forges, and the messenger who runs, the poet and musician who compose, all taste nearly the same pleasure, and in their several occupations equally find means to avoid that natural evil discontent.

The busy man is the happy man. To prove this, I distinguish two sorts of pleasures. The one are *the pleasures of the senses.* These are founded on corporeal wants, are enjoyed by all conditions of men, and at the time of enjoyment all are equally happy. But these pleasures are of short duration.

The others are *the pleasures of expectation.* Among these

these I reckon all the means of procuring corporeal pleasures; these means are by expectation always converted into real pleasures. When a joiner takes up his plane, what does he experience? All the pleasures of expectation annexed to the payment for his work. Now these pleasures are not experienced by the opulent man, who finds in his money, without labour, an exchange for all the objects of his desires. He has nothing to do to procure them, and is so much the more subject to discontent. He is therefore always uneasy, always in motion, continually rolling about in his carriage, like the squirrel in his cage, to get rid of his disgust.

To be happy, the idle opulent man is forced to wait, till nature excites in him some fresh desire. It is therefore the disgust of idleness, that in him fills up the interval between a gratified and a rising want. But in the artisan it is labour, which, affording him the means of providing for his wants and his amusements, becomes thereby agreeable.

The wealthy idler experiences a thousand instances of discontent, while the labouring man enjoys the continual pleasure of fresh expectations.

Labour, when it is moderate, is in general the most happy method of employing our time, when we have no want to gratify, and do not enjoy any of the pleasures of the senses, of all others doubtless the most poignant, and least durable.

How many agreeable sensations are unknown to him whom no want obliges to think! Do my immense

mense riches secure me all the pleasures that the poor desire but cannot obtain without much labour? I give myself up to indolence. I wait, as I just now said, with impatience, till nature shall awake in me some new desire; and while I wait, am discontented and unhappy. It is not so with the man of business. When the idea of labour, and of the money with which it is requited, are associated in the memory with the idea of happiness, the labour itself becomes a pleasure. Each stroke of the axe brings to the workman's mind the pleasure that the money he is to receive for his day's labour will procure him.

In general, every useful occupation fills up, in the most agreeable manner, the interval that separates a gratified from a rising want; that is, the ten or twelve hours of the day, when we most envy the indolence of the rich, and think they enjoy superior happiness.

The pleasure with which the carter puts his team to the cart, and the tradesman opens his chest and his journal, is a proof of this truth.

Employment gives pleasure to every moment, but is unknown to the great and opulent idler. The measure of our wealth, whatever prejudice may think, is not therefore the measure of our happiness. Consequently, in every condition, where, as I have said, a man can, by moderate labour, provide for all his wants, is above indigence, and not exposed to the discontent of the idly rich, he is nearly as happy as he can be.

Men, therefore, without being equal in riches and power

power, may be equal in happiness. Whence comes it, then, that kingdoms are peopled with none but the unfortunate?

CHAP. III.

OF THE CAUSES OF THE UNHAPPINESS OF ALMOST ALL NATIONS.

THE almost universal unhappiness of man, and of nations, arises from the imperfections of their laws, and the too unequal partition of their riches. There are in most kingdoms only two classes of citizens, one of which want necessaries, and the other riot in superfluities.

The former cannot gratify their wants but by excessive labour: such labour is a natural evil for all; and to some it is a punishment.

The second class live in abundance, but at the same time in the anguish of discontent*. Now discontent is an evil almost as much to be dreaded as indigence.

* To how many evils, besides that of discontent, are the rich exposed? How many cares and anxieties to increase and preserve

Most countries, therefore, must be peopled by the unfortunate. What would be done to make them happy? Diminish the riches of some; augment that of others; put the poor in such a state of ease, that they may by seven or eight hours' labour abundantly provide for the wants of themselves and their families. It is then, that a people will become as happy as they can be.

They then enjoy, with regard to corporeal pleasures, all that the rich enjoy. The appetite of the poor is by nature the same as that of the rich; and to use a trite proverb, *The rich cannot dine twice.* I know there are costly pleasures out of the reach of mere competency. But these may be always replaced by others, and the time between gratifying one want and the rising of another, that is between one repast and another, or one enjoyment and another, may be filled up in a manner equally agreeable. In every wise government men may enjoy an equal felicity, as well in the moments when they gratify their wants, as in those

a great fortune? What is a rich man? The steward of a great house, charged with the cloathing and feeding a number of valets that attend him.

If his domestics have secured a subsistence for their old age, and do not participate the disgust of their master's idleness, they are a thousand times more happy.

The happiness of a rich man is a complicated machine, some parts of which are always out of order. To be constantly happy, we must be so without much expence.

that

that separate one want from another. Now if life be nothing more than an aggregate of two sorts of periods, the man at his ease as I proposed to prove, may then equal in happiness the most rich and most powerful.

But it is possible for good laws to put all the people in the state of ease requisite for the acquiring of happiness? It is to that fact this important question is now reduced.

CHAP. IV.

THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO SET THE PEOPLE MORE AT THEIR EASE.

In the present state of most nations, if government, struck with the too great disproportion in the fortunes of the people, were desirous of making them more equal, it would doubtless have a thousand obstacles to surmount. Such a project, sagaciously conceived, could not, and ought not to be executed, but by continual and insensible alterations; these alterations however are possible.

If the laws should assign some property to every individual, they would snatch the poor from the horror of

indigence, and the rich from the misery of discontent, and render them both more happy.

But supposing these laws to be established, would men, without being equally rich and powerful*, think themselves equally happy? There is nothing more difficult to persuade them on the present plan of education. Why? Because from their infancy they have been accustomed to associate in their minds the idea of riches with that of happiness; and in almost all countries that notion is engraved the deeper in their memories, as they cannot obtain sufficient to supply their pressing and daily wants, without excessive labour.

* If I have contracted a great number of wants, it is in vain you would persuade me that a small fortune is sufficient to procure me felicity. If I have from my infancy united in my memory the idea of wealth with that of happiness, by what means shall I separate them at an advanced age? Can any one be ignorant of the power that the association of certain ideas has over us?

If, from the form of government, I have all to fear from the great, I shall respect grandeur mechanically, even in the nobleman who is a foreigner, and can have no power over me. If I associate in my mind the idea of virtue with that of happiness, I shall cultivate it, even when it shall be the object of persecution. I know very well these two ideas will at last separate, but it will be a work of time, and even a long time. To produce this effect, it is necessary that experiments have a hundred times convinced me, that virtue does not really procure any of the advantages I expected. It is in deep meditation on this fact, that we find the solution of an infinity of moral problems, that are insoluble without a knowledge of this association of ideas.

Would it be so in countries governed by sagacious laws ?

If the savage regards gold and dignities with the highest contempt, the idea of extreme wealth cannot be necessarily connected with that of extreme happiness. We may therefore form distinct and different ideas of them, and prove to mankind, that in the series of instants which compose their lives, all may be equally happy ; if by the form of government they can join to a state of ease, the security of their property, lives, and liberty. It is the want of good laws, that every where excites the desire of great riches.

CHAP. V.

OF THE EXCESSIVE DESIRE OF RICHES.

I SHALL not examine, in this chapter, if the love of money be the principle of action in most nations, and if in present governments this passion be not a necessary evil. I shall only consider it as relative to the influence it has on the happiness of individuals.

I shall only observe, that there are countries where the desire of enormous wealth becomes natural. Such are those countries where taxes are arbitrary, and consequently

sequently possessions uncertain, and where a reverse of fortune is frequent; as in the East, for there a prince can seize the property of his subjects with impunity.

In those countries, if men covet great riches, it is because always exposed to loss, they hope to save from a large fortune so much at least as shall be sufficient to subsist them and their families. Wherever the law has not sufficient force to protect the weak against the strong, opulence may be considered as a mean of avoiding injustice, the persecutions of power, and that contempt which is the constant companion of the weak. A great fortune is therefore desired as a safeguard against oppressors.

But in a country where a man is secure in his property, his life, and his liberty, where the people live in a certain state of ease, the only one who can reasonably desire immense wealth, must be the idle rich; he alone, in such a country, can think it necessary to his happiness; for his happiness consists in fantastic pleasures, and to fantastic pleasures there are no bounds*. To attempt to gratify them, is to fill the vessels of the Danaides.

* There are countries where pomp and caprice make a part of the wants, not only of the great, but the opulent also. Nothing is more absurd than what they call decent luxury; and yet it is not luxury by which they are ruined. If we look into their books of accounts, we shall see that their house-expences are not the

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Unhappiness of the rich in general.

In all countries where the people have no part in the government, and every emulation is extinguished, whoever is above want, is without motive for study and instruction; his mind is void of ideas; he is absorbed in discontent; he would fly from it, but cannot. Without resource from within, it is from without that he expects his felicity. Too idle to go to meet pleasure, he would have pleasure come to him. Now pleasure often makes men wait, and for this reason the rich are frequently and necessarily unhappy *.

Does my felicity depend on another? Am I passive in my amusements? Can I not divest myself of disquietude? What is to be done? A splendid table is of little consequence, I must also have horses, dogs, equipages, concerts, painters, pompous entertainments. No treasure can answer my expence.

A small fortune will suffice a busy man (2). The largest will not supply him that has no employ. A hundred villages must be laid waste to amuse an idle wretch. The greatest princes have not sufficient riches to satisfy the avidity of a woman, a courtier, or a pre-

most considerable, that the greatest part consists of capricious articles, jewels, &c. Wants of this sort, and their love of money, must be equally unlimited.

* Thee too, my Paridel, she mark'd thee there,
Stretch'd on the rack of a too easy chair;
And heard thy everlasting yawn confess,
The pains and penalties of idleness.

Pope.

late.

late. It is not the poor but the idly rich who feels most forcibly the want of immense riches. For which reason, how many nations are loaded with taxes and ruined: how many citizens are deprived of necessaries, merely to support the expence of a few discontented mortals! When riches have stupified the thinking faculty of man, he gives himself up to idleness. He feels at once a pain in moving himself, and an uneasiness from not being moved. He would be moved without the trouble of motion. What riches can procure such a whimsical exercise!

O ye indigent, you are not certainly the most miserable of mortals! To alleviate your sufferings, behold the idly opulent, who, passive in almost all their amusements, cannot divest themselves of discontent but by sensations too poignant to be frequent!

If I should be suspected of exaggerating the misery of the idly rich, let any one examine minutely what is done by most of the great and wealthy to avoid discontent, and he will be convinced that the malady is as cruel as it is common.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

OF DISQUIETUDE.

DISQUIETUDE is a disorder of the mind. Whence does it proceed? From the absence of sensations sufficiently acute to engage attention*.

If a moderate fortune compels us to labour, and we contract the habit of it; or if we pursue glory in the career of the arts and sciences, we shall not be exposed to disquietude: for it commonly attacks none but the idly rich.

* Weak sensations will not save us from disquietude; among these I place such as are habitual. I awake at the break of day; I am struck by the sun's rays reflected from every object that surrounds me; by the crowing of the cock, by the murmur of waters, and by the bleating of sheep, and am discontent. Why? Because these sensations are too habitual to make any strong impressions on me.

CHAP. VI.

OF THE MEANS INVENTED BY THE IDLE TO AVOID DISQUIETUDE.

In France, for example, a thousand social duties unknown to other nations, have been invented by disquietude. A lady marries and has a child. A female idler hears of it; she enjoins herself so many visits; goes every day to the door of the lying-in lady, speaks to the porter, gets into her coach again, and goes somewhere else, to get rid of her remaining uneasiness.

An idler moreover enjoins herself every day the writing of so many billets and letters of compliment, which are written and read with equal disgust.

The idle man would every instant feel strong sensations; they alone can save him from discontent. For want of those, he grasps at such as are within his reach. He is alone; he lights his fire; a fire is company. It is to procure a continual succession of new sensations, that the Turk and the Persian chew perpetually, the one opium and the other betel.

When an Indian is discontent, he places himself by the side of a river, and fixes his eyes on the stream. In France, the rich for the same reason pay an extravagant

vagant price for lodgings on the Quay des Theatins, where they see the boats pass, and feel from time to time some new sensations. This is a tribute of five or six hundred crowns, that the idler pays every year to disquietude: and which, if he were a man of business, he might distribute among the indigent. Now if the great and the rich are so frequently and forcibly attacked by this malady of discontent, no doubt it must have a strong influence on the manners of a nation.

CHAP. VIII.

OF THE INFLUENCE OF DISQUIETUDE ON THE MANNERS OF A NATION.

UNDER a government where the rich and the great have no management of public affairs, where, as in Portugal, superstition forbids them to think, what have the opulent idlers to do? To love. The attention that a mistress requires can alone fill up, in a lively manner, the interval between a gratified and a rising want. But that a mistress become an occupation, it is necessary that the lover be continually surrounded by perils,

that a vigilant jealousy perpetually opposing his desires, he may be continually employed in evading it*.

Love and jealousy are therefore in Portugal † the only remedies against disquietude. Now what influence may not such remedies have on national manners? It is to disquietude that Italy in like manner owes the invention of Cicisbeos.

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* What jealousy performs in this respect in Portugal, the law performed in Sparta. Lycurgus ordered that the husband should live separate from the wife, and see her only by stealth, and in private places. He knew that the difficulty of a rencounter would augment desire, draw the conjugal bond closer, and keep the two parties in an activity that would preserve them from disgust.

† There is no jealousy more violent, more cruel, and at the same time more lascivious than that of the Eastern women. I shall quote on this occasion a translation from a Persian poet. A sultana ordered a young slave whom she loved, and of whom she was jealous, to be stripped before her. As he lay extended at her feet, she threw herself upon him. "It is in spite of myself, she "said, that I again enjoy thy beauty. But I do enjoy it. Already "do thine eyes swim in tears of pleasure; thou gapest; thou diest. "Is it for the last time that I clasp thee to my bosom. The ex-"cess of intoxication blots out thy infidelity from my memory. "I am all sensation. All the faculties of my soul abandon me, "and are absorbed in pleasure. I am pleasure itself.

"But what ideas succeed to this delicious dream. Ha! shalt "thou be enjoyed by my rival! No! this body shall not pass to "her arms without at least disfigurement. Who shall restrain me? "Thou art naked and defenceless. Shall thy beauties disarm me? "I blush at the luxurious pleasures with which I behold the Dis-

Disquietude gave birth to the institution of chivalry.

Discontent doubtless had a part in the institution of chivalry. Those ancient and renowned knights cultivated neither arts nor sciences. The custom of the times would not permit them to acquire learning, nor their birth an application to commerce. What then could a knight do? Love. But if at the moment he declared his passion, his mistress had, according to modern practice, received his hand, and crowned his affection, they would have married, got children, and that would have been all. Now a child is soon got; and the husband and wife would have lived in discontent for the remainder of their days.

But to preserve their desires in full vigour, to find employment for their youth, and to avoid disgust, the knight and mistress engaged themselves by a tacit, but inviolable convention, the one to attack, and the other to resist for so long a time. Love by this mean became an occupation, and was a real one for the knight.

Always in action near to his beloved, the lover to succeed was obliged to show himself passionate in his

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" roundness of thy limbs. But my fury is come again! Love " nor pleasure no longer inspire me. Vengeance and jealousy " shall tear thee with scourges. Fear shall drive thee far from my " rival, and bring thee back to me.

" Thy possession at this price doubtless does not flatter my " vanity nor my sentiments; no matter, it will flatter my sensa- " tions.

" My rival shall die far from thee, and I will die in thy arms."

address,

address, and valiant in combat. He was to present himself at the tournament, where he must be nobly mounted, gallantly armed, and handle his lance with vigour and dexterity, The knight passed his youth in these exercises, and after spending much time in such occupations, they married, and the nuptial benediction given, the romance was at an end.

Perhaps in their old age those worthy knights were like some of our modern old warriors, disgusting and disgusted, boasters and bigots.

To be happy, is it necessary that our desires be accomplished as soon as conceived? No: pleasure will be pursued for some time. If in the morning I enjoy a fine woman, what shall I do the rest of the day? All appears disgustful. If I cannot see her till night, the torch of hope and pleasure brightens every moment of the day. A young man would have a seraglio. If he could obtain it, he would soon be exhausted with pleasure, and pass the remainder of his days in disgust. See, I would say to him, the absurdity of thy demand. Behold those princes, those men of enormous wealth and power, they possess all that thou enviest; what mortals are more discontented! If they enjoy all with indifference, it is because they enjoy it without want.

What different pleasures do two men feel in the forest, where one hunts for amusement, and the other to maintain his family? When the latter arrives at his hut loaded with game, his wife and children run to meet

meet him. Their faces are filled with transport, and he enjoys all that gives them pleasure.

Want is the principle of activity and happiness in man. To be happy he must have desires and gratify them with some pains: but the pains taken, he must be sure to enjoy the pleasure.

CHAP. IX.

OF THE MORE OR LESS DIFFICULT ACQUISITION OF PLEASURES, ACCORDING TO THE GOVERNMENT UNDER WHICH WE LIVE, AND THE POST WE OCCUPY.

I SHALL take the pleasure of women for an example. In England, love is not an occupation but a pleasure. A nobleman or a wealthy citizen is employed in the upper or lower house of parliament with the affairs of the nation, or at home with his commerce. His dispatches or his letters sent away, he goes to a fine girl to divert himself and not to sigh. What would a cicisbeo have to do at London? Nearly the same as at Sparta or at ancient Rome.

If in France even a minister have mistresses, no one is dissatisfied. But if he dissipate his time with them, he

he is derided. They are well content that he divert himself, but not that he sigh. The ladies are therefore expected to have regard to the troublesome situation of a minister, and not to embarrass him with difficulties. Perhaps they are not to be reproached on this account. They are sufficiently patriotic to save him even the trouble of a declaration, and are sensible that it is always in proportion to the disengagement of a lover that they ought to adapt their resistance.

CHAP. X.

WHAT SORT OF MISTRESS IS PROPER FOR AN IDLER.

LITTLE account is now made of the Platonic love, the corporeal affection is preferred, and this in fact is not the least poignant. When the stag is inflamed by this last love, from timid he becomes brave. The faithful dog quits his master to follow his favourite female; if he be separated from her, he neglects his food, he trembles in every limb, and sends forth hideous howlings. Can Platonic love do more? No: I declare therefore for corporeal love. M. Buffon does the same, and like him I think that of all loves it is the most agreeable,

agreeable, except however for the idler; for him the coquette is the delicious mistress. When she enters an assembly adorned in that gallant manner, that gives all room to hope for what she grants but to very few, the idler is roused; his jealousy is inflamed; his discontent vanishes*. A coquette therefore is the mistress of an idler, and a fine girl for a man of business.

The chase after a woman, like that of game, should be different according to the time we have to employ in it. When we have only an hour or two, we go out with a gun; when we have more time than we know how to employ, and wish for long exercise, we set the dogs to rouse the game. A woman of address will afford the idler a long chase.

In Canada, the courtship of the Indian is concise. He has not time for a regular address. He must hunt and fish. He therefore offers the match to his mistress; does she blow it? he is happy. If we were to describe the loves of Marius and Cæsar while their thoughts were occupied by Sylla and Pompey, either the story would be improbable, or like that of the Indian it would be very concise. Cæsar should then repeat, I came, I saw, I conquered.

If on the contrary we should describe the rural loves

* The ruling passion of a coquette is to be adored. For which purpose she constantly excites the desire of men, and scarcely ever gratifies them. A woman, says the proverb, is a table well provided, that we view with a different eye before and after the repast.

of

of idle shepherds, we ought to give them mistresses delicate, cruel, and above all prodigiously bashful. Without such a mistress Celadon would die of disgust.

CHAP. XI.

OF THE DIFFERENT SORTS OF ROMANCES, AND OF LOVE IN THE IDLE AND BUSY MAN.

WOMEN in different ages have been allured by different baits, and hence the various descriptions we have of love. The subject however is always the same, that is, the union of a man with a woman. When the writer has put them both in one bed, the romance is finished.

If works of this sort differ from each other, it is only in the variety of means employed by the hero in order to make his mistress agree to this rather vulgar expression, *I want to lie with you**.

The style of the romance changes according to the age and government under which the writer lives, and the degree of idleness he gives his hero. In a busy

* When the hero of a comedy or a tragedy is in love, they both make the same demand, the only difference is in the manner of expressing it.

nation love is regarded as of little importance. It is inconstant, and as fading as the rose. While the lover is at his first solicitations, and receives the first favours, it is the rose in bud. At the first pleasures the bud opens, and discovers the blowing rose. By repeated pleasures it becomes full blown. When it has attained all its beauty, it begins to wither, the leaves drop off, and it dies to flourish again the following year; love in like manner withers to bloom again with a new mistress.

Among an idle people, love becomes an affair of importance, and is more constant.

What cannot discontent and idleness operate on the manners of men. If among people of fashion, says Rochefoucault, there be no happy marriages, it is because in France, a rich woman does not know how to pass her time. Discontent pursues her. She would fly from it; takes a husband and contracts debts. The husband raves; she will not hear him. They irritate and detest each other, because they are idle, discontented, and unhappy (3). It is otherwise with the wife of a labourer or plowman. In this state, the husband and wife love each other, because they are employed and mutually useful to each other. The wife watches over her domestic affairs, and nurses her children, while the husband labours in the field.

Idleness is often the mother of vice, and always of discontent. It is even in religion that a remedy is sought against this discontent.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

OF RELIGION AND ITS CEREMONIES, CONSIDERED AS A REMEDY AGAINST DISQUIETUDE.

In India, where the land produces without culture more than sufficient for the wants of an idle people, what, says a learned Englishman, can preserve them from discontent, but religion and its numerous rites. So that purity of soul requires there so many superstitious rites and ceremonies, that there is no Indian, how careful soever he may be, that does not commit every instant some crime by which God will be irritated, till the priests, enriched by the offerings of the sinner, are appeased and satisfied. The life of an Indian is in consequence nothing more than a perpetual purification, ablution, and penitence.

In Europe when women attain a certain age, and leave off paint, gallants, and frequenting the theatres, they sink into an insupportable discontent. What is to be done. They must substitute new occupations in the place of the old, become devout, and enjoin themselves a number of pious duties; go every day to mass, to vespers, to a sermon, to visit their confessor, and fast. We like better to be lean than discontented. But at what age does this metamorphosis take place?

Commonly

monly about forty-five or fifty. This is the time when women begin to see the devil: their prejudices then represent him to their minds in a lively manner.

It is with prejudices as with the flower de luce*, the mark is sometimes visible, but the confessor and executioner easily make them re-appear. Now if mankind seek, even in a puerile devotion the means of escaping from disquietude, that malady must be very common and very cruel. What remedy can be found for it? None that is efficaeious; palliatives only can be here applied; among these the arts of amenity are the most powerful, and it doubtless arises from discontent that they are improved.

It has been said of chance, that it is the common parent of ali diseoveries. Now, if corporeal wants may, after chance, be regarded as the inventors of the useful arts, the want of amusement ought to be regarded, in like manner, after the same chance, as the inventor of the arts of amenity.

Their object is to excite in us such sensations as will preserve us from discontent. Now, such sensations are the more efficacious in proportion as they are strong and distinct.

The objeet of these arts is to affect, and the several rules of poetry and eloquenee are nothing more than the means of producing affecting sensations.

* French criminals used to be sometimes branded with a flower de luce! T.

To affect is the principle, and the precepts of rhetoric are its amplifications or consequences. It is because the rhetoricians have not equally perceived the full extent of this idea, that I shall take the liberty of pointing out its source.

My subject authorises this investigation. It is by a knowledge of the remedies applied against discontent, that we become the better acquainted with its nature.

CHAP. XIII.

OF THE ARTS OF AMENITY, AND OF THOSE OF THIS KIND THAT ARE CALLED THE FINE ARTS.

THE object of these arts, as I have already said, is to please, and consequently to excite in us such sensations, as without being painful are strong and lively. When a work produces this effect it meets with applause *.

* In the pleasing art, the more lively a sensation is, the more beautiful the object that produces it is esteemed. On the contrary, the more strong a disagreeable sensation is, the more ugly or frightful the object is thought by which it is produced. When we judge from our own sensations, that is, for ourselves, our judgments are always just. When we judge from prejudices, that is

Causes of the love of novelty.

The beautiful is that which strikes us forcibly, and by the expression, *a knowledge of the beautiful,* is meant the means of exciting in us sensations which are the more agreeable in proportion as they are more new and distinct.

It is to the means of producing this effect that all the various rules of poetry and eloquence may be reduced.

If we seek novelty in the work of an artist, it is because novelty produces a sensation of surprize, a lively emotion. If we would have an author think for himself, and despise him who copies after others, it is because works of that kind present to our minds such ideas only as are too trite to make strong impressions on us.

Why do we require of the writers of romance and tragedies, extraordinary characters and new situations? From a desire of being affected: and such situations and characters are necessary to excite in us lively sensations.

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after others, our judgments are always false; and these are our most common judgments.

I open a modern book: the impressions it makes on me are more agreeable than those of an ancient author; I even read the latter with disgust: no matter; it is the ancient I extol. Why? Because the generations of mankind are the echoes of each other, and we esteem from the report of others, even those very works that give us disgust.

Envy, moreover, forbids us to admire a contemporary, and envy influences almost all our judgments. To humble the living how many eulogies are lavished on the dead.

Habit diminishes the strength of impressions.

Habit diminishes the vivacity of an impression. I see with indifference what I always see, and even the beautiful ceases to be so to me. I have so often beheld the sun, that sea, this landscape, and fine woman, that to excite my attention or admiration, the sun must paint the heavens with colours more lively than common, the sea must be ravaged by storms, the landscape must appear with uncommon lustre, and the woman present herself to me under a new form.

The continuance of the same sensations renders them at length insensible to us, and hence that inconstancy and love of novelty, common to all men; for all would be affected in a strong and lively manner*.

If all objects strongly affect youth, it is because all objects are new. With regard to compositions, if the taste of youth be less judicious than that of maturer age, it is because that age has less sensibility, and the correctness of taste supposes, perhaps, a certain difficulty in being moved. But man will be affected. It is not sufficient that the plan of a work be new, we require, if it be possible, that all the circumstances of it be new likewise. The reader would have every verse, every line, every word, excite a sensation in him. So Boileau says on this subject, in one of his epistles; if

* The work the most despised, is not the work that has most faults, but that void of beauties; it falls from the hands of the reader, because it does not excite any lively sensations in him.

his

his verses please, it is not because they are all equally correct, elegant, and harmonious.

Mais mon vers bien on mal, dit toujours quelque chose.

But my verse good or bad, still has something to say.

In fact the verses of this poet contain almost always an idea or an image, and consequently almost always excite a sensation in us. The more lively the sensation is, the more beautiful the verse appears, and when it makes the strongest impression possible it becomes sublime*.

It is therefore by the greater or less force that we distinguish the beautiful from the sublime.

CHAP. XIV.

OF THE SUBLIME.

The only way to form an idea of the word *sublime*, is to recollect the passages cited as such by Longinus, Despreaux, and most of the rhetoricians.

* The more forcibly we are affected, the more happy we are; provided however the sensations be not painful. But in what state do men feel the most of this sort of sensations? Perhaps in that of a man of letters, or an artist. It is in the workshops of the artists, perhaps, that we should look for happy men.

What the impressions excited in us by those passages have in common, is what constitutes the sublime.

The better to understand the nature of the sublime, I shall distinguish it into two sorts, the one of imagery, the other of sentiment.

OF SUBLIME IMAGES.

To what sort of sensation is given the name of sublime?

To the strongest, when it does not, as I have said, produce pain.

What perception produces this sensation in us?

That of fear: fear is the daughter of pain; and makes us recollect the idea of it.

Why does this idea make the strongest impression on us? Because an excess of pain excites in us a more lively sensation than an excess of pleasure, for there is no pleasure that produces a poignancy of sensation comparable to the torture felt by a Ravailliac or a Damien. Of all passions fear is the strongest: therefore the sublime is always the effect of the sensation of a terror commenced.

But do facts agree with this opinion? To be certain of this let us examine among the several objects of nature, which are those that appear to us sublime.

They are the immensity of the heavens, the profundity of the sea, the eruptions of volcanoes, &c.

Whence arises that striking impression which those great objects excite in us? From the great force they

they declare to exist in nature, and from the involuntary comparison we make between that force and our own weakness. At that view we feel ourselves seized with a certain respect which always supposes in us a sensation of a fear or terror commenced.

For what reason, in fact, do we give the name of Sublime to the picture in which Julio Romano represents the combat of the Giants, and refuse it to that in which Albano has painted the sports of the Loves? Is it more easy to paint a Grace than a Giant, or to colour the picture of the toilet of Venus, than that of the field of battle of the Titans? No: but when Albano transports me to the toilet of the goddess, nothing excites in me the sentiment of respect and terror. I see none but pleasing objects, and consequently give the name of Agreeable to the impressions they make on me.

On the contrary, when Julio Romano transports me to the spot where the sons of earth heap up Ossa on Pelion; struck with the grandeur of the spectacle, I am necessarily led to compare my strength with that of the giants; and convinced of my weakness, I feel a sort of secret terror, and give the name of Sublime to the impression of fear which the picture makes on me.

In the tragedy of Eumenides by what art did Eschylus and the decorators of the theatre make so lively an impression on the Greeks? By presenting them with a drama and decorations that were tremendous. These impressions were perhaps horrible to some, as they

were extended even to pain. But the same impressions moderated, would have been generally acknowledged as sublime.

The sublime in imagery therefore always supposes *the sensation of a terror begun* *, and cannot be produced by any other sensation†.

When God said, *Let there be light, and light was*; this image is sublime. What a striking picture is that of the universe produced in an instant out of nothing by the light! But should such an image inspire fear? Yes; because it is necessarily associated in our minds with the idea of the Creator of such a prodigy; and being then seized in an involuntary manner with a dread of the Author of light, we feel the sensation of a commencing terror.

Are all men equally struck by this grand image? No: for it does not appear to all with equal force. As it is from what we know that we attain to what is unknown, to conceive all the grandeur of this image, we must represent to ourselves that of a profound night, when the clouds heaped on each other redouble the darkness, when the lightning, kindled by the winds,

* To what sort of tales do men, women, and children listen with the most avidity? Those of robberies and apparitions. Such stories terrify; they produce the sensation of a terror begun, and this sensation makes the strongest impression on them.

† If in general the Indians make more offerings to the wicked divinity than to the good, it is because man has more fear of pain, than love of pleasure.

tears

tears the clouds asunder, and when by the repeated and transient flashes, the sea, the plains, the forests, the groves, the mountains, and the whole universe, each instant vanish, and again appear.

If there be no man unaffected by this scene, what must have been the sensations of him, who having no idea of light, saw it for the first time give form and colours to the universe! * With what admiration must he have beheld the sun, the producer of those wonders, and with what an awful fear reflected on the Being who had created it!

Those grand images that imply an immense force

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* How beautiful soever this image may be in itself, I agree with Despreaux, that it still owes a part of its beauty to the brevity of expression. The more concise an expression is, the more surprize an image excites. *God said let there be light, and light was.* All the meaning of the phrase is explained in the last word *was**. Now its pronunciation, almost as rapid as the effects of the light, presents in an instant the greatest picture the human mind can conceive.

If this image (says Despreaux on this subject) had been diffusedly expressed as for instance in the following manner: "The "sovereign ruler of all things commanded the light to form it-"self, and at the instant that marvellous work called light was "formed:" it is evident this great image would not have had the same effect on us. Why? Because the brevity of expression, by exciting in us a sudden and unforeseen sensation, adds to the most astonishing impression of the picture.

* If this criticism be just, the English version, by putting the words in another order (let there be light and there was light) has partly destroyed the beauty of the expression. T.

in

in nature are therefore alone sublime; it is they alone that inspire us with sentiments of awe, and consequently of a commencing terror. Such are those of Homer, when to give a grand idea of the power of the Gods, he says

Far as a shepherd from some point on high,
O'er the wide main extends his boundless eye,
Thro' such a space of air, with thund'ring sound,
At one long leap th' immortal coursers bound.

POPE.

And such is this other image of the same poet:

Heav'n in loud thunders bids the trumpet sound,
And wide beneath them groans the rending ground:
Deep in the dismal regions of the dead
Th' infernal monarch rear'd his horrid head;
Leap'd from his throne, lest Neptune's arm should lay
His dark dominions open to the day,
And pour in light on Pluto's drear abodes,
Abhor'd by men, and dreadful ev'n to Gods.

POPE.

If the name of Sublime be given in like manner to the bold compositions of the adventurous Milton, it is because his images, always grand, excite in us the same sensation.

In physics, grandeur implies great force, and great force commands our respect.

This is what constitutes the sublime of this sort.

OF THE SUBLIMITY OF SENTIMENT.

The *myself* of Medea, the *exclamation* of Ajax, the *let him die* of Corneille, the *oath of the seven chiefs* before

fore Thebes, are unanimously cited by rhetoricians as sublime; and I conclude, that if in physics it consists in grandeur and force of images, it is in morals to the grandeur and force of characters that we give in like manner the name of Sublime. It is not Thyrsus at the feet of his mistress, but Scævola with his hand in the burning coals, that inspires me with respect, always mixed with some degree of fear. Every great character will constantly produce the sensation of a terror commenced. When Nerina says to Medea.

> Thy people hate thee; faithless is thy spouse;
> For thee, what rest against so many foes?
> Myself!

That word astonishes; it supposes in Medea so much confidence in the force of her art, and especially in her character, that, struck with her audacity, the hearer is at the word *myself* seized with a certain degree of respect and terror.

Such is the effect produced by the confidence Ajax has in his own strength and courage, when he cries out.

> Great God let darkness from our eyes be driv'n,
> And fight against us by the light of heav'n*.

Such confidence creates respect in the most intrepid.

The *let him die* of old Horace, excites the same impression. A man in whom a passion for honour and

* This may be very sublime in Homer, but would be mere bombast in a modern writer. T.

for

for Rome is exalted to such a degree as to disregard the death of a son he loves, must command respect.

With regard to the oath of the seven chiefs before Thebes.

The seven, a warlike leader in each chief,
Stood round, and o'er the brazen shield they slew
A sullen bull, then plunging deep their hands
Into the foaming gore, with oath invok'd
Mars, and Enuo, and blood-thirsting terror*.

Such an oath announced on the part of the chiefs a desperate vengeance. But as this vengeance could not fall on the auditors, whence arose the fear ?

From the association of certain ideas.

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* Perhaps some people may think the following passage in an English author, equally sublime with any of the foregoing, and superior to most of them :

Look then abroad thro' nature to the range
Of planets, suns, and adamantine spheres,
And speak, O man ! does this capacious scene
With half the kindling majesty dilate
The strong conception, as when Brutus rose
Refulgent, from the stroke of Cæsar's fate,
Amid the croud of patriots ; and his arm
Aloft extending, like eternal Jove,
When guilt brings down the thunder, call'd aloud
On Tully's name, and shook his crimson steel,
And bade the father of his country Hail !
For lo ! the tyrant prostrate in the dust,
And Rome again is free ?

AKENSIDE. T.

That

That of terror is always associated in the mind with the idea of strength and power. They are united as the ideas of cause and effect.

Am I the favourite of a king or an enchanter? My tender respectful friendship is always mixed with some fear; and in the good they do me, I always perceive the evil they can do me.

Moreover, if the sentiment of pain, as I have said, be the most poignant, and if it be to the most poignant impression, when not too painful, that we give the name of Sublime, the sensation of the sublime, as experience proves, must always include a terror commenced.

It is in this manner that the sublime is most clearly distinguished from the beautiful.

OF THE SUBLIME IN SPECULATIVE IDEAS.

Are there any philosophic ideas to which the rhetoricians give the name of Sublime? None. Why? Because the most general and fruitful ideas of this sort, are not conceived but by a small number of those who can rapidly perceive all their consequences.

Such thoughts may without doubt awaken a great number of sensations, produce a long chain of ideas, which, seized as soon as presented, may excite in us strong impressions, but not of the sort of those to which we give the name of *sublime*.

If there be no geometric axioms cited by the rhetoricians as Sublime, it is because we cannot give that name

to ideas to which the ignorant, and consequently the greatest part of mankind, are insensible.

It is therefore evident,

1. That the beautiful is what makes on most men a strong impression.

2. That the sublime makes a still stronger impression, that is always mixed with a certain sensation of awe or commencing terror.

3. That we measure the beauty of a work by the impression more or less strong which it makes on us.

4. That all the rules of poetry laid down by the rhetoricians are nothing more than the several means of exciting in men sensations strong or agreeable.

CHAP. XV.

OF THE VARIETY AND SIMPLICITY REQUISITE IN ALL WORKS, AND ESPECIALLY IN WORKS OF AMENITY.

WHY do we require so much variety in works of amenity? Because, as la Mothe says, *disgust is the child of uniformity.* Sensations of the same nature soon cease to make impressions that are strong and agreeable. There are no objects so beautiful as not to tire by a long contemplation. The sun is beautiful, and yet

yet the little girl in the Oracle cries out, *I have seen the sun so often!* A fine woman is to a young lover an object still more beautiful than the sun: yet how many lovers cry out in like manner, *I have seen my mistress so often*!*

An aversion to disgust, and a want of agreeable sensations, makes us long incessantly for such as are new. If we desire in consequence, variety in the detail, and simplicity in the plan, it is because such ideas are more complete, more distinct, and more proper to produce lively impressions.

Ideas difficult to comprehend, are never forcibly felt. When a picture is too crowded with figures, or the plan of a work too complex, it excites in us only dull and faint ideas†. Such is the sensation felt at the

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* It is doubtless very agreeable, said the president Hainault, to meet one's mistress at the rendezvous; but when she is not a *new* mistress, it is much more agreeable to go there and not meet her.

† The plan of Heraclius appeared at first too complex to the polite world; it required too much of their attention. Boileau alludes to this tragedy in these verses of his Art of Poetry.

> Je me ris d'un auteur qui lent a s'exprimer,
> De ce qu'il veut d'abord ne sait pas m'informer,
> Et qui debrouillant mal une penible intrigue,
> D'un divertissement me fait une fatigue
> J'aimerois mieux encore qu'il declinat son nom, &c.

" I laugh at the author who is a long time in explaining himself, " who does not know how to tell me his intention at once, but by " badly unfolding an intricate plot, makes a fatigue of a diversion. " I had rather he would decline his name."

sight

sight of one of those Gothic temples that the architect has loaded with sculpture: the eye, distracted and fatigued by the great number of ornaments, cannot fix itself without a painful effort.

Too many sensations at the same time create confusion; their multiplicity destroys their effect. In buildings of the same extent, that is the most striking of which the eye can easily survey the whole together, and of which every part makes the most perfect and distinct impression on the mind. The simple, noble, and majestic architecture of the Greeks is, for this reason, always preferred to the light, confused, and ill-proportioned buildings of the Goths.

If what I have here said of architecture be applied to works of literature, it will be found that to produce a great effect, they must in like manner, explain themselves clearly, and constantly present distinct and complete ideas. For this reason an observance of the law of custom in the ideas, the images, and the sentiments, has been always expressly enjoined by rhetoricians.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

OF THE LAW OF CUSTOM.

IDEA, image, sentiment; in a book every part should be prepared and finally concur.

An image false in itself disgusts. If a painter should draw a bed of roses on the surface of the sea, those two incoherent and unnatural images would be displeasing. The imagination would not know where to fix the roots of the roses, nor conceive by what means the stalk was supported.

Even an image true in itself, still displeases me when it is not in its proper place, when nothing conducts and prepares it. We do not sufficiently recollect, that in good works almost all their beauties are local. I shall take for example a rapid succession of true and different paintings. Such a succession is in general agreeable, as exciting in us lively sensations. To produce this effect however, it must be skilfully prepared.

I love to pass with Isis, or the cow Io, from the burning climates of the torrid zone to those dens, those rocks of ice, on which the sun obliquely shines. But the contrast of those images would not produce a lively impression on me, if the poet, by declaring all

the power of the jealousy of Juno, had not already prepared me for the sudden change of the picture.

Let what I here say of images be applied to sentiments. That they may make a strong impression on the theatre, they must be conducted and prepared with art. Those with which a character is animated, must be such as are peculiar to the position in which he is placed, and the passion with which he is possessed (4).

For want of an exact conformity between the position and sentiments of a hero, the sentiments become false; and the spectator not perceiving in him the source of those sentiments, feels a sensation the less lively as it is the more confused.

From sentiment let us pass to ideas. Have I a new truth to present to the world? That truth, almost always too difficult for the generality of men, is at first comprehended but by a small number of them. If I would have it generally received, I must previously prepare their minds; I must lead them to it by degrees, and at last bring them to a point of view from which they may distinctly behold it. But is it sufficient to deduce this truth from a simple fact or principle? No: to the precision of the idea I must join the perspicuity of expression.

It is to this last quality of perspicuity that almost all the rules of style relate.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

OF PERSPICUITY OF STYLE.

It is not sufficient that our ideas be clear and just. To communicate them to others we must know how to express them with precision. Words are the representative signs of our ideas. When the signs are obscure, the ideas are so likewise; that is, when the signification of the words has not been precisely determined.

In general, all that we call turns and happy expressions, are only those turns and expressions that are most proper to express our thoughts clearly. It is therefore to perspicuity as I have said, that almost all the rules of style may be reduced.

Why is ambiguity of expression regarded as the principal fault in all writings? Because ambiguity in the words extends to the ideas, renders them obscure, and prevents that lively impression they should make on us.

If we require an author to be diversified in his style, and in the turns of his phrases, it is because uniform turns dull the attention; and the attention once rendered

dered stupid, ideas and images offer themselves less clearly to the mind, and produce but weak impressions.

Why do we require conciseness in style? Because the shortest expression, when it is proper, is always the clearest; and that we may constantly apply to style these verses of Despreaux,

> Tout ce qu'on dit de trop est fade & rebutant:
> L'Esprit rassasiè le rejette a l'instant.

All that is said too much is insipid and disgustful: the satiated mind rejects it in an instant.

If purity and correctness be required in any work; it is because they both assist in rendering it more perspicuous.

Lastly, why do we read with so much pleasure those writers who express their ideas by brilliant images? Because their ideas thereby become more striking, more clear and distinct, in a word, more proper to make a lively impression on us. It is therefore to perspicuity alone that all the rules of style may be referred.

But do men annex the same idea to the word *style*? This word may be taken in two different senses.

It may be either regarded as a more or less happy manner of expressing our ideas; and it is in this point of view I consider it.

Or a more extensive signification may be given to the word, by confounding the idea with the expression of that idea.

It is in the last sense that M. Beccaria, in a dissertation full of spirit and sagacity, says, that to write well we should furnish our minds with an infinity of ideas accessory to the subject of which we treat. In this sense the art of writing is the art of exciting in the reader a great number of sensations, and we are deficient in style only because we are deficient in ideas.

For what reason in fact does a man write well on one matter, and ill on another ? He is not ignorant either of the happy turns, or of the propriety of the words of his language. To what then attribute the weakness of his style ? To the want of ideas.

But what do men in general mean by a well written work ? A work clearly conceived. The public judge only by the effect of the whole ; and that judgment is just, when it is not proposed, as here, to distinguish the ideas from the manner of expressing them. The true judges of this manner are the national writers, and it is on them also the reputation of a poet depends ; whose principal merit consists in the elegance of diction.

The reputation of the philosopher, sometimes more extensive, is more independent of the judgment of a single nation. The truth and sagacity of ideas is the principal merit of a philosophical work, and of those all people are judges.

Let not the philosopher however imagine, in consequence of this, that he may neglect the ornaments of

style. There are no writings which the beauty of expression does not embellish.

To please a reader, we must always make strong impressions on him. The necessity of affecting him either by the force of expression or by ideas, has been constantly recommended by the rhetoricians and writers of every age. The several rules of the art of poetry, as I have already said, are nothing more than the means of producing this effect.

When an author is deficient in facts, and cannot fix our attention by the grandeur of his images or his thoughts; if his style be rapid, concise, and chaste, one continued series of elegance, it will sometimes conceal his impotence*. The writer who is poor in ideas, should be rich in words, and substitute for the excellence of thoughts a brilliancy of expression.

This is a receipt of which men of genius themselves have sometimes made use. I might cite for example certain parts of the works of M. Rousseau, where we find nothing but a mass of contradictory ideas and principles. He affords but little instruction, but his colouring, always animated, entertains and delights.

The art of writing consists therefore in the art of exciting sensations. So that the president Montesquieu himself has sometimes produced admiration, and astonished the mind by ideas more brilliant than just.

* It is perhaps as extraordinary to find a good writer in a man of mediocrity, as a bad one in a man of discernment.

If by their fallacy being known, his ideas do not continue to make the same impression, it is because, in matters of instruction, truth alone is beautiful and obtains a durable esteem.

When there is a deficiency of ideas, a whimsical arrangement of words may sometimes amuse the reader, and produce a lively sensation.

Expressions that are strong*, obscure, and uncommon, may supply, on a first reading, a vacuity of thought. A capricious word or obsolete expression, will excite a surprize, and every surprize an impression more or less strong. The epistles of the poet Rousseau are a proof of this.

In every species, especially in that of amenity, the beauty of a work is measured by the sensation it makes on us. The more complete and distinct this sensation is, the more lively is the impression it makes. All poetics are nothing more than a commentary on this simple principle, and a developement of its primitive rule.

When the rhetoricians repeat after each other, that

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* A false idea requires an obscure impression. An error clearly expressed is presently discovered. To dare to express our thoughts fully, is to show we are sure of their truth. The quacks of every sort write obscurely. There is no school divine who can say with Boileau, *My thoughts always present themselves to broad day.*

Ma pensée au grand jour toujours s'offre & s'expose.

the perfection of the works of art depends on their exact resemblance to those of nature, they deceive themselves : experience proves that the béauty of works of this sort, consists less in an exact imitation, than in an improved imitation of nature.

CHAP. XVIII.

OF AN IMPROVED IMITATION OF NATURE.

In the cultivation of the arts there are found works that have no model, and whose merit is consequently independent of any resemblance to known objects. The palace of a monarch is not modelled after the palace of the universe ; nor the concords of our music adapted to that of the celestial spheres ; those sounds have never yet struck any mortal ear.

The only works of art whose merit consists in an exact imitation of nature, are the figures of men, brutes, fruit, flowers, &c. In almost every other species it is in an embellished imitation of nature that the merit of the work consists.

When Racine, Corneille, or Voltaire, bring a hero on the stage, they make him say, in a manner the most concise, the most elegant, and harmonious, precisely what

what he ought to say. Yet no hero ever talked in such a manner. It is impossible that Mahomet, Zopyrus, Pompey, Sertorius, &c. whatever capacity we may suppose them to have had,

1. Always spoke in verse*.

2. That in their conversations they always used the most concise and most correct expressions.

3. That they pronounced discourses extempore, which two other great men, such as Corneille and Voltaire, were sometimes a fortnight or a month in composing.

In what did the great poets imitate nature? In making their characters always talk in a manner conformable to the passions with which they were supposed to be animated †. In all other respects they embellished nature, and they did right.

But how is nature to be embellished? All our ideas come to us by the senses; we cannot compose but after what we have seen. How can we conceive any

* And what is still more absurd, according to the French tragedies, in rhyme. T.

† On the stage the hero ought always to express himself in conformity to his character and situation. The poet cannot here imitate nature too closely. But he ought to adorn it by collecting in a conversation of perhaps half an hour, all the remarkable strokes in the whole life of the hero.

Perhaps Moliere made all the miseries of the age contribute to the character of his Miser; as Phidias all the strong men of his age to the model of his Hercules.

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thing beyond nature? and suppose we could conceive it; by what means could we communicate the idea to another? I answer, as in description, for example, what we understand by a new composition, is properly nothing more than an assemblage of objects already known; yet this new assemblage is sufficient to astonish the imagination, and excite impressions the more strong in proportion as they are more new.

Of what do the painters and sculptors compose a sphinx? Of the wings of an eagle, the body of a lion, and the head of a woman. How was the Venus of Apelles composed? Of all the beauties contained in the bodies of the ten most beautiful women in Greece. It was thus that by embellishing, Apelles imitated nature: and after his example, painters and poets have since dug the dens of the Gorgons, modelled the Typhons, constructed the palaces of Fairies and Goddesses, and in short, decorated with all the riches of genius the various fortunate places of their habitation.

Suppose a poet were to describe the garden of Love. The icy and mortal breath of Boreas would never there be felt, but the Zephyrs would sweep over the alleys of roses to blow the flowers and gather their odours. The sky would there be constantly pure and serene. No cloud would ever obscure it. There would be no mire in the fields, no insects in the air, or vipers in the woods. The mountains would be there crowned with

with orange trees and pomegranates in flower, the plains covered with waving corn, and the vallies traversed by a thousand rivulets, or watered by a majestic stream, whose vapours elevated by the sun, and collected in the reservoir of the heavens, would never be sufficiently condensed to descend in rain upon the earth.

The poet would place in this garden ambrosial fountains overshadowed with trees bearing golden apples, forming bowers round them ; and to their shade would Love and Psyche, be conducted, naked, amorous, and surrounded by the arms of pleasure. Never would the restless bee with his sting disturb their joys.

It is thus that poetry embellishes nature, and by the decomposition of objects already known, recomposes beings and pictures whose novelty excites surprise, and frequently produces in us the most lively and powerful impressions.

But by what enchantment are we enabled thus to alter and recompose objects, to create, as it were, in the universe, and in man, new beings and sensations? This enchantment is the work of abstraction.

CHAP

CHAP. XIX.

OF THE POWER OF ABSTRACTION.

THERE are few abstract terms in the language of savages, and many in those of polished nations. The latter, interested in the investigation of an infinity of objects, perceive each instant the necessity of communicating their ideas clearly and rapidly; for this purpose they have invented a great number of abstract terms; the study of the sciences compelled them to it.

Two men, for example, are to consider a quality common to two bodies; these two bodies may be compared relatively to their magnitude, their density, their form, or their colours. Now what have these two men to do? They are first to determine the subject of their examination. If it be merely the colours of the bodies they are to compare, and they be both white, they invent the word whiteness; and fixing all their attention on that quality common to both bodies, become better judges of their different degrees of whiteness.

If the arts and sciences have from this motive produced an infinity of abstract terms in every language, can it be surprising that by their example poetry has also formed its abstractions; that it has personified and deified the imaginary beings of force, justice, vir-

tue, fever, victory, &c. which are nothing more in reality than man considered as strong, just, virtuous, diseased, victorious, &c. and that they have in short peopled Olympus with abstractions?

Does a poet undertake to be the architect of the celestial abodes, and to construct the palace of Plutus? He places the edifice in the centre of mountains of the colour and density of gold. He then gives to massy stones the splendor of rubies or brilliants: by these means he is enabled to construct the palace of Plutus, or the crystalline walls of heaven. Without this power of abstraction, Milton would not have been able to assemble in the garden of Eden, or the fairies, so many picturesque points of view, so many delicious grottoes, trees, and flowers, in a word, so many beauties distributed by nature among a thousand countries.

It is by the power of abstraction that the writers of romance create pigmies, genii, enchanters, &c. in short, that Fortunatus whose invisibility is nothing but the abstraction of the apparent qualities of bodies.

It is to the power of divesting an object of all its defects*, and of creating roses without thorns, that man owes all his factitious pains and pleasures.

* He who should represent on the stage a tragic action in the the manner it really happened, would run great risk of disgusting the spectators.

What should the poet then do? Divest the relation of every thing that will not make a lively impression.

It

For what reason is it in fact, that we always expect more pleasure from the possession of an object than it really procures us? Why so much difference between the pleasure expected and enjoyed? Because we take the pleasure in reality as it comes, whereas in hope we enjoy the same pleasure without any mixture of that pain or trouble which almost always attends it.

That perfect happiness which we seek is not to be found but in the palace of hope and imagination. It is there that poetry paints as eternal, those rapid moments of intoxication which love scatters, at wide distances, in the career of our days. It is there that we imagine for ever to enjoy that energy and warmth of sensation which we feel but once or twice in our lives, and which doubtless arise from the novelty of sensations excited in us by the first objects of our tenderness. It is there, in fine, that exaggerating a pleasure rarely tasted and often desired, we over-rate the felicity of opulence.

If chance open to poverty the temple of wealth, when illuminated by a hundred tapers, and resounding with sprightly music; then the indigent struck with the splendor of the decorations, and the harmony of the instruments cries: how happy are the rich! His felicity, as far exceeds mine as the magnificence of this temple does the poverty of my hut. He is however mistaken, and the dupe of the lively impression just received; he does not know that it is in part an

effect

effect of the novelty of the sensations which he feels, and that an habitual enjoyment would dull the vivacity, render the temple and the concert insipid; and moreover that the pleasures of the rich are purchased by a thousand cares and anxieties.

But indigence has by its abstractions divested riches of all the cares and discontent by which they are attended*.

Without the power of abstraction our conceptions would not extend further than enjoyment. Now, if in the bosom of delights we still feel desires and regrets, it is, as I have said, an effect of the difference we find between imaginary and actual pleasure.

The power of resolving and recomposing objects, and of creating such as are new, we may regard not only as the source of an infinity of factitious pains and pleasures, but also as the only mean of embellishing nature by imitation, and of carrying the arts of amenity to the highest degree of perfection.

I shall not expatiate any further on the beauty of these arts. I have shewn that their principal object is to preserve us from discontent: that this object is

* The power of abstracting from a condition different from our own the evils we have not felt, makes a man always envy the lot of another. What should he do to eradicate this envy, so incompatible with his happiness? Undeceive himself, and learn, that a man above want is nearly as happy as he can be.

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the better accomplished as they excite in us sensations that are more lively and distinct; and lastly, that it is always by the greater or less force of those sensations, that the degree of perfection and beauty of works of this sort are to be estimated.

Let us then honour and cultivate the fine arts: they are the glory of the human mind (65), and the source of an infinity of delicious sensations. But let us not imagine the idly rich to be superlatively happy in the enjoyment of their most masterly productions.

We have seen in the first chapters of this section, that without being equal in riches and power, all men may be equally happy, at least in the ten or twelve hours of the day employed in the gratifying their several corporeal wants.

With regard to the ten or twelve hours, which separate a gratified from a rising want, I have proved that they are filled up in the most agreeable manner when they are consecrated to the acquisition of the means of providing abundantly for our wants and amusements. What can I do more to confirm the truth of this opinion, except stop a moment to consider which is the most assuredly happy, the opulent idler, so fatigued with having nothing to do, or the man of mediocrity, whose fortune compels him to a daily labour that he can pursue without weariness.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

OF THE IMPRESSIONS OF THE ARTS OF AMENITY ON THE OPULENT IDLER.

If a rich man be by his situation compelled to a labour that habit renders agreeable; he may, by being continually employed in his occupation, like the man of mediocrity, avoid discontent.

But where find opulent men of this sort? Sometimes in England, where money opens the career to ambition. Every where else the rich, accompanied by idleness, are passive in almost all their amusements. They expect amusement from the objects that surround them, and but few of those objests excite in them lively sensations. Besides, such sensations cannot succeed each other rapidly, nor be removed incessantly. The days of the idler, therefore, pass away in a stupid languor.

In vain does the rich man collect about him the arts of amenity; these arts cannot procure him incessantly new impressions, nor preserve him a long time from discontent. His curiosity is so soon gratified, the idler has so little sensibility, the chef d'œuvres of the arts make on him impressions so soon effaced, that to amuse him they must be incessantly renewed. Now

all the artists of an empire could not, under these circumstances, supply his wants.

A moment only is sufficient for admiration: an age is necessary to produce a masterpiece of art. How many wealthy idlers pass daily under the magnificent portal of the old Louvre, which strangers behold with astonishment, without feeling one agreeable sensation.

To shew the difficulty of amusing a rich idler, it should be observed that there are but two conditions of man; in one of which he is active, and the other passive.

CHAP. XXI.

OF THE ACTIVE AND PASSIVE STATE OF MAN.

In the first of these states a man can support himself a considerable time in the same situation without discontent. In the second he cannot. I can perform six hours in a concert, but I cannot listen to one three hours without disgust.

No man is more difficult to amuse than the passive idler. All things disgust him. It is this universal discontent that renders him so severe a judge of the beauties of the arts, and that makes him require so much

much perfection in their works. If he were more sensible and less discontent, he would be more easily pleased.

What lively impressions can the arts of amenity excite in the idle? If those arts charm us, it is by retracing and embellishing in our minds the images of past pleasures, and by exciting in us the desire of tasting them again. Now what desire can they awaken in a man who is rich enough to purchase all pleasures, and is already satiated with them?

In vain do the dance and decorations, in a word, the pleasures the most voluptuous, and most peculiarly consecrated to love, by recalling intoxication and transports, attempt to make any impression on him, who is already exhausted with the fatigue of enjoyment. If the rich court balls and theatres, it is for a change of disgust, and by that change to alleviate their discontent.

Such in general is the lot of princes. Such was that of the famous Bonnier. Scarcely had he formed a wish, before the genius of riches came to accomplish it. Bonnier was tired of women, concerts, and theatres: so unhappy he was that he had nothing left to wish for. Had he been less rich, he would have had desires.

Desire is the moving principle of the soul; without desire it stagnates! We must desire to act and act to be happy. Bonnier died of disgust in the midst of delights.

Activity necessary to happiness.

Our only lively enjoyment is from hope. Happiness resides less in the possession than in the attainment of the objects of our desires.

To be happy, we must want something of our felicity. It is not after having acquired a million of money, but in the acquirement that we are really fortunate. It is not after having been prosperous, but in prospering that we are happy. The soul then always in action, always agreeably agitated, knows no discontent.

Whence arises the immoderate passion of the great for the chace? Because passive in almost all their other amusements, and consequently always uneasy, it is in the chace alone that they are forced to be active. Men are also active when gaming; and for that reason the gamester is the less liable to disgust *.

Men, however, play either high or low. In the first case gaming is attended with anxiety, and sometimes with mischievous consequences; in the second, it is almost always insipid.

That rich and passive idleness so envied by all, and that under an excellent form of government, would not be seen without disgrace, is not therefore so happy as imagined; for it is commonly exposed to discontent.

* Play is not always used as a remedy for disgust. Small play, a game of amusement is sometimes a cover-fool. People frequently play with a hope of not being known for what they are.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

IT IS THE RICH WHO FEEL MOST SENSIBLY THE WANT OF RICHES.

If the opulent idler never thinks himself sufficiently rich, it is because the riches he enjoys are not sufficient for his happiness. Has he musicians in pay? Their concerts do not fill the vacuity in his mind. He must also have architects, a vast palace, an immense cage to inclose a mournful bird. He wants besides hunting equipages, balls, festivals, &c. Discontent is a fathomless gulph, that would swallow up all the wealth of an empire, perhaps that of the whole universe. Labour only can fill it up. A small fortune will suffice a laborious citizen: his life, simple and uniform, is attended with no tempest. It was not in the tomb of Crœsus*, but on that of Baucis, this epitaph was engraved:

"His death was the evening of a beautiful day."

* If felicity were always the companion of power, what man would have been more happy than the Califf Abdoulrahman. Yet the following is the inscription he ordered to be engraved on his tomb: "Honours, riches, sovereign power; I have enjoyed "them all. Cotemporary princes have esteemed and feared me,

Great treasures are the appearance of happiness, not the reality. There is more true happiness in the house of competency than in that of opulence ; and men sup more gaily at a tavern, than with the president Hainaut.

He who is employed is free from discontent. So that the workman in his shop, or the tradesman behind his counter, is often more happy than his sovereign. A moderate fortune compels us to daily labour ; if that labour be not excessive, and if the habit of it be contracted, it then becomes agreeable*. Every man who by a labour of this sort can provide for his corporeal wants and amusements, is nearly as happy as he can be†. But should we reckon amusements among our wants ? Men as well as children must

" and envied my happiness : they have been jealous of my glory, " and sought my friendship. In the course of my life I have " carefully marked all the days on which I tasted pure and true " pleasure, and in a reign of fifty years, I have counted only " fourteen."

* We are yet ignorant of the power which habit has over us. Prisoners we are told, are well fed and lodged in the Bastile, and yet they there die of chagrin. Why ? Because they are deprived of their liberty, that is, they cannot exercise their common occupations.

† The condition of the workman who can by a moderate labour, provide for his wants, and those of his family, is perhaps of all conditions the most happy. The want that compels his mind to application and his body to exercise, is a preservative against discontent and disease : now these are evils, joy and health advantages.

have

have moments of recreation, or a change of employment. With what pleasure do the workman and the lawyer quit, the one his shop and the other his office, for the theatre? If they be more affected there than the man of pleasure, it is because the sensations they there feel being less dulled by habit, have more novelty for them.

Have we moreover contracted the habit of a certain exercise of body and mind? That occupation accomplished, we become sensible to amusements, even where we are passive. If those amusements be insipid to the idly opulent, it is because they make a business of pleasure, and not a relaxation. The labour to which man was formerly, they say, condemned, was not a punishment of heaven, but a benefaction of nature. Labour supposes desire, and the man without desire vegetates without any principle of activity; the body and the soul remain, if I may use the expression, in the same attitude*. Occupation is the happiness of man†.

* One of the principal causes of the ignorance and sloth of the Africans, is the fertility of that part of the world; which supplies almost all necessaries without culture. The African has therefore no motive for reflection, and in fact he reflects but little. The same may be said of the Caribbs; if they be less industrious than the savages of the North of America, it is because they have less occasion to labour for subsistence.

† It is necessary for the happiness of man, that pleasure should be the reward of labour, but of moderate labour. If nature had of herself provided for all his wants, she would have made him the

But to be occupied and use exercise, what is necessary? A motive: and of all others that of hunger is the most powerful, and most general. It is this that commands the peasant to labour in the fields, and the savage to hunt and fish in the forest.

A want of another kind animates the artist and the man of letters: the desire of glory, of the public esteem and of the pleasures they represent.

Every want, every desire, compels men to labour, and when they have contracted an early habit it becomes agreeable. For want of that habit, idleness renders labour hateful, and it is with aversion that men sow, reap, or even think.

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most pernicious of all presents; he would have passed his days in languor; the idly rich would have been without resource against discontent. What palliative could there have been for this evil? None: if all the people were without wants, all would be equally opulent. Where then would the wealthy idler find men to procure him amusement?

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

OF THE POWER OF IDLENESS.

When men have the choice of being thieves or labouring, it is the former profession they embrace. Mankind in general are idle, they prefer almost always fatigue, danger, and death itself, to the labour of cultivating the earth. My examples are the great nation of the Malaccans, part of Tartary, and the Arabs, all the inhabitants of Taurus, Caucasus, and the high mountains of Asia.

But it will be said, whatever be the love of mankind for idleness, and if there be nations of thieves, who are formidable for their warlike spirit, are there not also nations of labouring people? Yes, because the existence of a nation of thieves supposes that of people who may be robbed. The former are not very numerous, because many sheep are necessary to the maintenance of a few wolves: and because the thieving nations inhabit barren and inaccessible mountains, and cannot, but in such retreats, resist a numerous and civilized nation. Now if it be true, that men are in general pirates and robbers, whenever the natural situation of their country permits it with impunity; the love

love of robbery must then be natural to them. On what is this love founded? On idleness, that is, on an inclination to obtain, with the least trouble possible, the object of their desires.

Idleness is in man the secret cause of the greatest effects. It is from a want of motives sufficiently powerful to preserve them from idleness, that the Satraps, as much thieves and more idle than the Malaccans, are also more discontented and unhappy.

CHAP. XXIV.

A MODERATE FORTUNE SECURES THE HAPPINESS OF A CITIZEN.

HABIT renders labour easy: if we do that always without pain which we are always doing, and if every mean of acquiring pleasure ought to be reckoned among the pleasures, a moderate fortune, by compelling man to labour, secures his felicity the better, as labour always fills up, in the most agreeable manner the time that separates a gratified want from the next that shall arise, and consequently the twelve only hours of a day in which we suppose the greatest inequality in the happiness of men.

When

When a government secures to its subjects the full possession of their property, their lives and their liberty; opposes the too unequal distribution of the national riches and preserves all the people in a certain degree of ease, it supplies them with all the means of being nearly as happy as they can be.

Therefore, without being equal in wealth and dignity, individuals may be equal in felicity. But however demonstrable this proposition may be, are there any means to persuade mankind of its truth, and to prevent them from perpetually associating in their minds, the idea of happiness with that of opulence?

CHAP. XXV.

OF THE ASSOCIATION OF THE IDEAS OF HAPPINESS AND WEALTH IN THE MINDS OF MEN.

In every country where men are not secure in their property, their lives, and their liberty, the ideas of wealth and happiness must be frequently confounded. Men are in want of protection, and riches procure it.

In all other countries distinct ideas may be formed of them. If the Fakirs by the aid of a religious catechism can persuade mankind of the grossest absurdities,

ties, why may we not by the aid of a moral catechism persuade them that they are happy, when to be so, it is only necessary to think themselves so*? This belief makes a part of our felicity. Whoever thinks himself unhappy, is unhappy. But can men deceive themselves in this important point? What are then the greatest obstacles to man's felicity? Ignorance and envy.

That passion which is laudable in youth while it bears the name of emulation, becomes pernicious when in advanced age it assumes that of envy. Whence does it proceed? From a false and exaggerated opinion which we form of the felicity of certain conditions, and the way to destroy this opinion is to enlighten mankind. It is by a knowledge of the truth that they are to be reformed; this alone can stifle in them the intestine war, which secretly and eternally excited among

* There are two habitual causes of the unhappiness of men. The one is, *An ignorance of the little that is necessary to our happiness*; the other, *imaginary wants, and desires without bounds*. Is a merchant rich? He would be the richest in his city. Is a man a king? He would be the most powerful of all kings. We should sometimes remember the saying of Montaigne: *That when we are seated, be it on a throne or a jointstool, we are always on our breech,* that if power and wealth be the means of attaining happiness, we should not confound the means with the end; that we should not purchase with too many cares, labours, and dangers, what we can have at a cheaper rate; and lastly, that in the search of happiness we should not forget that it is happiness we seek.

among men of different professions and talents, divides almost all the members of polished societies.

Ignorance and envy, by filling them with the gall of an unjust and reciprocal hatred, has prevented them too long from discovering an important truth, which is, that a small fortune, as I have proved, is sufficient for their happiness*. Let not this be regarded as a common-place maxim of the pulpit or the professor's chair: the more accurately it is examined, the more clearly its truth will appear.

If a reflection on this axiom can convince an infinity of individuals of their happiness, who want nothing to be so, but to think themselves so, this truth is not therefore one of those speculative maxims that cannot be applied to practice.

* Those men, who from a state of opulence pass to that of mediocrity, are doubtless unhappy. They have in their first state, contracted desires which they cannot gratify in the second. I therefore here speak of such men only as being born without fortune have no habits to overcome. A small fortune is sufficient for the happiness of the latter; at least in countries where opulence does not intitle a man to public esteem.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVI.

OF THE REMOTE UTILITY OF MY PRINCIPLES.

If I be the first that has proved the possibility of an equal distribution of happiness among individuals, and geometrically demonstrated this important truth: I am happy; I can regard myself as the benefactor of mankind, and say,

All that moralists have published concerning the equality of conditions, all that the writers of romance have said about the talisman of Orosames, was but an obscure perception of what I have proved.

If I should be reproached with having insisted too long on this question, I should reply, that the public felicity consisting of that of all the individuals, in order to know what constitutes the happiness of the whole, we must first know what constitutes the happiness of each individual; and show, that if there be no government where all men can be equally rich and powerful, there is none where they may not be equally happy; and lastly, that there may be a legislation where (except such as are in peculiarly unfortunate circumstances) none would be unhappy but fools.

But an unequal partition of happiness among individuals,

viduals, supposes a less unequal partition of the national riches. Now in what government of Europe can such a partition be at present established? The realization of it indeed does not appear to be at hand. However, the alteration that is daily making in the constitutions of all empires, proves at least that it is not a Platonic chimera.

After a time, more or less remote, all possibilities, say the sages, must be realized; why then despair of the future felicity of mankind? Who can maintain that the truths here established, will be always useless to mankind?

It will be extraordinary, but necessary, in a given time, that a Penn, a Manco Capac, shall be born to give laws to rising societies. Now suppose (what perhaps will be still more extraordinary) that, jealous of a new glory, such a man should be desirous of consecrating his name to posterity under the title of a friend to mankind; and that consequently more anxious for the establishing of good laws, and the happiness of his people, than the increase of his power, that man should wish to make them happy and not slaves; there is no doubt, as I shall prove in the ninth section, that he would perceive in the principles I have here established, the source of a new legislation, and one that is more conformable to the happiness of mankind.

NOTES.

NOTES.

1. (page 198). THERE are no calumnies with which the clergy of France have not blackened the philosophers. They accused them of not acknowledging any superiority of rank, birth or dignity, and thought thereby to irritate people in power against them; but this accusation was happily too vague and absurd. In fact, in what respect can a philosopher regard himself as equal to a nobleman? It must either be as a christian, for under that title, all men are brothers; or in quality of the subject of a despot, because all his subjects are slaves, and all slaves are essentially of the same condition. Now philosophers are not apostles either of popery or of despotism; and besides, there ought not to be any despot in France. But are the titles with which noblemen are decorated in France, any thing more than the toys of a puerile vanity? Have they necessarily any part in the management of public affairs, any real power? They are not great in this sense, but they bear titles of respect, and ought to be respected.

2. (p. 211.) The man of business has little discontent, and little desire. When we seek immense wealth, it is with a design to avoid discontent, or to procure pleasures. He who has no want, is indifferent to wealth. It is with the love of money as with that of luxury; when a young man is fond of women, he regards luxury in furniture, feasts, and equipages, as means of seducing them, and is therefore fond of luxury. When he grows old, and becomes insensible to love, he ungilds his coach, is drawn by old horses, and takes off the lace from his cloaths. This man

loved

loved luxury as the means of procuring certain pleasures, but when he no longer desires those pleasures, he has no longer any love for luxury.

3. (p. 223.) The marriage of persons of certain conditions frequently represents nothing more than the picture of unfortunate people who are chained together, to be a reciprocal torment to each other.

Marriage has two objects: the one the preservation of the species, the other the pleasure and happiness of the two sexes. The search of pleasure is permitted: why should we deprive ourselves of it, when it is not detrimental to society?

But marriage, as it is instituted in catholic countries, agrees not equally with all professions. To what shall we refer the uniformity of its institution? I answer, to the conformity between this mode of matrimony and the primitive state of the inhabitants of Europe, that is, the state of peasants. In that rank the man and woman have a common object of desire, which is the improvement of the land they occupy; this improvement results from their mutual labours. The man and wife constantly occupied in their farm, and always useful to each other, support, without disgust, and without inconvenience, their indissoluble union. It is not the same in other professions.

The clergy do not marry. Why? Because in the present form of matrimony, the church is of opinion, that a wife, a family, and the cares attendant on them, would divert a priest from his functions. But do they divert the magistrate, the man of letters, and the minister; and are not the functions of these more serious and important than those of a priest? Do the governments of Europe think this form of marriage better adapted to the profession of arms? As a proof of the contrary, they forbid it to almost all their soldiers. Now what does this interdiction suppose? That nations instructed by experience, have found that a wife corrupts the manners of a warrior, stifles his patriotic spirit, and renders him at length effeminate, slothful, and timid.

What a remedy is there for this evil? In Prussia, if a soldier of

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the first battalion meets with a handsome girl, he lies with her, and their union lasts as long as their love and convenience. If they have children and cannot maintain them, the king takes care of them, they are brought up in a house founded for that purpose. The monarch there forms a nursery of young soldiers. Now if this prince had the disposal of a much greater number of ecclesiastical funds, he might execute on a large scale what he can now do on a small one, and his soldiers, at once lovers and fathers, would enjoy all the pleasures of love without emasculating their manners, or losing any part of their courage.

The law of indissolubility in marriage, is a cruel and barbarous law, says Fontenelle. The few happy marriages in France prove the necessity of a reformation in this matter.

There are countries where the lover and his mistress do not marry till after they have lived together three years. During that time they try the sympathy of their characters. If they do not agree, they part, and the girl goes to another.

These African marriages are the most proper to secure the happiness of the parties. But how then must the children be provided for! By the same laws that secure their maintenance in countries where divorces are permitted. Let the sons remain with the father, and the daughters go with the mother; and let a certain sum be stipulated in the marriage articles for the education of such children; and let the tenths of the clergy and the hospitals be charged with the maintenance of those whose parents are incapable. The inconvenience of divorce will then be insignificant, and the happiness of the married parties secured. But, they will say, how many divorces will there be under a law so favourable to human inconstancy! Experience proves the contrary.

To conclude, if the variable and roving desires of men and women urge them sometimes to change the object of their tenderness, why should they be deprived of the pleasure of variety, if their inconstancy, by the regulation of wise laws, be not detrimental to society?

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NOTES ON SECTION VIII.

In France the women are too much mistresses; in the East too much slaves: they are there a sacrifice to the pleasure of men. But why should they be a sacrifice? If the two parties cease to love, and begin to hate each other, why should they be obliged to live together?

Besides, if it be true that the desire of change be so conformable as is said to human nature, the privilege of change may be proposed as the reward of merit; and by this soldiers may be made more brave, magistrates more just, artisans more industrious, and men of genius more studious.

What sort of pleasure is there, that, in the hands of a wise legislator, may not be made the instrument of public felicity?

4. (p. 242.) There are few tragic poets who know mankind: few among them who sufficiently study their various passions, to make them always talk their proper language: yet every one has a peculiar dialect. Is a man to be turned aside from an imprudent or dangerous action, and does humanity undertake to give him advice in the affair? It operates on his vanity; it shews him the truth, but in expressions the least offensive; and at the same time softens the most severe parts of it by tone and gesture.

Severity speaks bluntly, malignity in a manner the most mortifying. Pride commands imperiously; it is deaf to all reply, it will be obeyed without hesitation. Reason examines with the man the sagacity of his actions, hears his reply, and submits to the judgment of those whom it concerns.

Amity, full of tenderness for his friend, contradicts him with regret: if he be not able to persuade, he has recourse to prayers, and tears, and conjures him, by the sacred bond that unites their happiness, not to expose himself to so dangerous an action.

Love takes another tone, and to combat the resolution of her admirer, alleges no other motive than her pleasure and her love; if those fail, she at last condescends to reason, for reason is always the last resource of love.

One may therefore discover the sort of character or passion, by

NOTES ON SECTION VIII.

the manner in which the advice is given. But has a fraud a peculiar language? No: the impostor borrows sometimes that of friendship, and is to be discovered by the difference between the sentiments which he affects, and those which he must have. When we examine the language of the different passions and characters, we find the tragic writers frequently deficient. There are few of them who do not, for want of knowing how to make a character speak the language of a particular passion, give it that of another. I cannot speak of the tragic poets without quoting Lord Shaftsbury: he alone appears to me to have the true idea of tragedy. "The object of comedy, he says, is the correction of "the manners of private persons; that of tragedy ought to be in "like manner the correction of the manners of ministers and sove-"reigns. He adds, why not intitle tragedies, *The tyrant king*, "*the weak, superstitious, haughty, or adulated monarch.* This "is the only method of rendering tragedies still more useful."

5. (p. 256.) A man instructed by the discoveries of his progenitors receives the inheritance of their thoughts; which is a legacy he is charged to leave to his descendants, improved by some of his own ideas. How many men, in this respect, die insolvent.

SECTION

SECTION IX.

OF THE POSSIBILITY OF LAYING DOWN A GOOD PLAN OF LEGISLATION.

OF THE OBSTACLES WHICH IGNORANCE OPPOSES TO ITS PUBLICATION.

OF THE RIDICULE WHICH IT THROWS ON EVERY NEW IDEA, AND EVERY PROFOUND STUDY OF MORALITY AND POLITICS.

OF THE INCONSTANCY WHICH IT SUPPOSES IN THE HUMAN MIND: AN INCONSTANCY INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE DURATION OF GOOD LAWS.

OF THE IMAGINARY DANGER TO WHICH (IF WE BELIEVE IGNORANCE) THE PUBLICATION OF A NEW IDEA, AND ESPECIALLY NEW PRINCIPLES OF LAWS, MUST EXPOSE EMPIRES.

OF THE TOO FATAL INDIFFERENCE OF MEN TO THE EXAMINATION OF MORAL OR POLITICAL TRUTHS.

OF THE TITLE OF TRUE OR FALSE GIVEN TO THE SAME OPINIONS, ACCORDING TO THE MOMENTARY INTEREST WE HAVE TO BELIEVE THE ONE OR THE OTHER.

CHAP. I.

OF THE DIFFICULTY OF LAYING DOWN A GOOD PLAN OF LEGISLATION.

Few celebrated men have written on morality and legislation. What is the cause of their silence? Is it the

the grandeur, the importance of the subject, and the number of ideas, in short, the extent of understanding necessary to treat it properly? No: Their silence is the effect of the indifference of the public for works of this sort.

A work of this kind when well executed is regarded at best as nothing more than the dream of a well-meaning man, it becomes the subject of a thousand discussions, a thousand disputes, that the ignorance of some and the duplicity of others render interminable. In what contempt must not that work be held, whose distant utility is always treated as a Platonic chimera.

In countries that are polished, and already subject to certain laws, manners, and prejudices, a good plan of legislation being always incompatible with an infinity of personal interests, established abuses, and plans already adopted, will always appear ridiculous. It will be a long time before its importance is demonstrated, and during that time it will be always contested.

If, however, a man of elevated and nervous character, should be desirous of braving ridicule and enlightening nations on the important object of their happiness, may I be permitted to remind him, that the public will scarcely attend to the discussion of a complicated question, and that if there be a method to fix their attention on the problem of an excellent legislation,

legislation, it is by rendering it simple and reducing it to two propositions.

The object of the first should be the discovery of laws proper to render men as happy as possible, and consequently to procure them all the amusements and pleasures compatible with the public welfare.

The object of the second should be the discovery of means by which a people may be made to pass insensibly from the state of misery they suffer, to the state of happiness they might enjoy.

To resolve the first of these propositions, we must follow the example of mathematicians. When a complicated problem in mechanics is proposed to them, what do they ? Simplify it ; calculate the velocity of moving bodies without regarding their density, the resistance of fluids that surround them, their friction with other bodies, &c.

To resolve the first part of the problem of an excellent legislation, we should, in like manner, pay no regard to the resistance of prejudices, or the friction of contrary and personal interests, or to manners, laws, and customs already established. The inquirer should act like the founder of a religious order, who in dictating his monastic laws has no regard to the habits and prejudices of his future subjects.

It will not be so with the second part of this problem. It is not after our own conceptions, but from a knowledge of the present laws and customs, that we can determine the means of gradually changing those cus-

toms and laws, and of making a people pass, by insensible degrees, from their present legislation to the best possible.

It is an essential and remarkable difference between these two propositions, that the first being once resolved, its solution (except in some differences arising from the particular situation of a country) becomes general, and the same for all nations.

On the contrary, the solution of the second ought to be different according to the different form of each state. It is evident that the government of the Turks, Swiss, Spaniards, or Portuguese, must be necessarily placed at distances, greater or less, from a perfect legislation.

If genius alone be sufficient to solve the first of these propositions, to solve the second there must be added to genius a knowledge of the principal laws and manners of the people whose legislation is to be insensibly changed.

To treat a question of this sort properly, it is necessary in general to have studied, at least in a summary manner, the customs and prejudices of the people of all ages and all countries. We cannot persuade men but by facts: we cannot instruct them but by examples. The man who opposes the clearest reasonings will often submit to facts the most equivocal.

But these facts acquired, what are the questions whose examination can give the solution of the problem

blem of the best legislation? I shall enumerate those that present themselves the first to my mind.

CHAP. II.

OF THE FIRST QUESTIONS WE SHOULD ASK OURSELVES WHEN WE WOULD ESTABLISH GOOD LAWS.

We may ask,

1. What motive unites men in society? Is it the fear of ferocious beasts that obliges men to live separate from them, and to destroy them to secure their own lives and subsistence; or did some other motive of the same kind form the first colonies?

2. Were not mankind once united, and becoming successively hunters, pastors, and husbandmen, obliged to form conventions and give themselves laws?

3. Can these laws have any other foundation than the common desire of securing their property, their lives, and their liberty, which, in an unsocial state, as in that of despotism, is exposed to the violence of the strongest?

4. Can that arbitrary power under which a citizen is exposed to the insults of violence, and where he is

is deprived even of the right of natural defence, be regarded as a form of government?

5. Does not the establishment of despotism in an empire destroy all the bonds of social union? Do not the same motives, the same wants that united men at first, command them to dissolve a society where, as in Turkey, a man has no property in his goods, his life, or his liberty; where, in short, the citizens being in continual war among themselves know no other laws than those of force and fraud?

6. Can property be a long time respected without introducing, as in England, a certain equilibrium of power among the different classes of citizens?

Is there any method of preserving the duration of that equilibrium; and is not its maintenance absolutely necessary for opposing, in an efficacious manner, the continual efforts of the great to possess the property of the little?

8. Are the means proposed by Mr. Hume, in his small but excellent treatise on a perfect republic, sufficient to produce this effect?

9. Does not the introduction of money into a republic *, at length produce that unequal distribution of wealth which furnishes the powerful with those fetters which they put on their fellow-citizens?

* Gold, the corrupter of the manners of a nation, is a sorcerer that frequently converts an honest man into a knave. Lycurgus knew this well, and chased the wizard from Lacedæmon.

10. Have

Questions on legislation.

10. Have the poor really a country? Does the man without property owe any thing to the country where he possesses nothing? Must not the extremely indigent, being always in the pay of the rich and powerful, frequently favour their ambition? And lastly, have not the indigent too many wants to be virtuous?

11. Could not the laws unite the interest of the majority of the inhabitants with that of their country, by the subdivision of property?

12. After the example of the Lacedæmonians, whose territory being divided in thirty-nine thousand lots, was distributed among thirty-nine thousand families, who formed the nation, might not, in case of too great an increase of inhabitants, a greater or less extent of land be assigned to each family, but still in proportion to the number that compose it*?

13. Should not a less unequal distribution of land and wealth †, keep an infinity of men from that evil

* On this supposition, to preserve a certain equality in the distribution of property, if a family diminishes it must cede a part of its land to some neighbouring and more numerous families. Why not?

† When the number of proprietors in a nation is very small, in proportion to the great number of inhabitants, even the suppression of taxes would not preserve the latter from misery. The only way to relieve them would be to levy a tax on the state or the clergy, and employ the produce in purchasing small portions of land, which being distributed every year among the poorest families, would continually augment the number of proprietors.

which is occasioned by the exaggerated idea they form of the felicity of the rich*, an idea that produces great enmity among men, and great indifference for the public welfare?

14. Is it by a large or small number of wholesome and clear laws, that nations should be governed? were the Romans in the time of the emperors, when the multiplicity of laws occasioned their being collected into the codes of Justinian, Trebonius, &c. more virtuous and happy than under the laws of the Twelve Tables?

15. Does not the multiplicity of laws occasion an ignorance and inexecution of them?

16. Does not the same multiplicity of laws, often contrary to each other, oblige nations to employ certain men and bodies of men to interpret them? may not these men or bodies of men, charged with their interpretation,

* The prospect of luxury certainly increases the misery of the poor. The rich know it, and retrench nothing of their parade. What is the misery of the poor to them? Princes themselves are very little concerned about it; they regard their subjects as nothing better than despicable cattle. If they nourish them, it is because their increase promotes the prince's interest. All governments talk about population. But what empire should be made populous? That whose people are happy. To multiply the inhabitants under a bad government, is a barbarous method of multiplying wretches; it is to furnish tyranny with new instruments to enslave other nations, and render them equally unhappy. It is to propagate the miseries of mankind.

terpretation, insensibly change the laws and make them the instruments of their ambition? And lastly, does not experience teach us, that wherever there are many laws, there is little justice?

17. In a wise government ought there to be suffered two supreme and independent powers, such as the temporal and spiritual?

18. Ought the magnitude of cities to be limited?

19. Does their extreme extent permit their manners to be properly inspected? Can the salutary punishments of shame and infamy be properly inflicted in great cities*; and in such cities as Paris or Constantinople, may not an offender, by changing his name and abode always escape punishment?

20. May not a certain number of small republics by a federative compact, more perfect than that of the Greeks, shelter themselves from the invasion of an enemy, and the tyranny of an ambitious citizen?

21. If a country as large as France were to be divided into thirty provinces or republics, and to each of them a territory nearly equal were to be assigned, and if each of these territories were circumscribed by immutable bounds, or its possession guaranteed by the other twenty-nine republics, is it to be imagined that any one of those republics could enslave all the others,

* Under a wise government the punishment of shame alone would be sufficient to restrain the citizen to his duty.

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that is, that any one man could combat with advantage against twenty-nine men?

22. On the supposition that all these republics were governed by the same laws, where each of them took care of its interior police and the election of its magistrates, and reported its conduct to a superior counsel; or where the superior counsel composed of four deputies from each republic, and principally occupied with the affairs of war and politics, should be yet charged with observing that none of those republics changed its legislation without the consent of all the others: and where, moreover, the object of the laws should be to improve the minds, exalt the courage, and preserve an exact discipline in their armies: on such supposition, would not the whole body of the republics be sufficiently powerful to oppose efficaciously any ambitious projects of their neighbours, or of their fellow-citizens*?

23. On the hypothesis that the legislation of those republics would render the people as happy as possible, and procure them all the pleasures compatible with the public welfare, would not then these same republics be morally certain of unalterable felicity?

* The injustice of man has in general no other measure than that of power. The master-piece of legislation therefore consists in so confining the power of each citizen, that he may never attack with impunity the life, liberty, or property, of another. Now this problem has been hitherto no where better resolved than in England.

24. Ought

24. Ought not the plan of a good legislation to include that of an excellent education? Can such an education be given a people without presenting them with clear ideas of morality, and without deriving its precepts from the sole principle of a love for the general good? By making men in this manner recollect the motives that united them in society, might it not be proved to them, that it is almost always their real interest to sacrifice a personal and momentary advantage to the national advantage, and by that sacrifice to merit the title of honourable and virtuous citizens?

25. Can morality be founded on any other principles than those of public utility? Does not even the injustice committed by despotism, being always in the name of the public good, prove that this is the sole principle of morality *: and can the private advantages of family and relations be substituted for it †?

26. On the supposition that the axiom which says, *that we owe more to our relations than to our country,*

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* When the monk enjoys the love of God before all things, he constantly identifies himself and his church with God, and therefore says nothing more than that we ought to love and respect him and his church above all things. He alone is the true friend to his country, who says, after the philosophers, that every love ought to give place to that of justice and the public good.

† If a man do not regard the love of his country as the first principle of morality, he may be a good father, husband, and son, but will always be a bad citizen. What crimes has the love of relations occasioned!

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is to be held sacred, might not a father with a design to preserve his family abandon his post at the hour of battle; and if intrusted with the public money, might he not embezzle it to maintain his children, and thus plunder what he ought to love the most, to enrich what he ought to love the least?

27. Whenever the public welfare is not the supreme law, and the first obligation of a citizen *, does there still subsist a science of good and evil; in short, is there any morality where the public good is not the measure of reward and punishment, of the esteem or contempt due to the actions of citizens?

Can men flatter themselves with finding virtuous citizens in a country where honours, riches, and reputation are, by the form of government, the rewards of crimes; where, in a word, vice is respected and prosperous?

29. Have not men then reflecting that the desire of

* Are men insensible to the evils which a bad administration occasions, and but weakly affected with the dishonour of their nation? Do they not partake the shame of its defeats and its slavery? They are vile and dastardly citizens. To be virtuous, they must be wretched in the misery of their fellow-citizens. If there were in the East a man whose soul was truly honest and noble, he would pass his days in tears; he would have for most of the vizirs the same horror that they formerly had in France for Bullion, who when Lewis XIII. began to be affected by the miseries of his subjects, made him this atrocious reply; "Your people are yet "happy enough that they are not reduced to feed on the grass."

happiness

happiness is the sole motive of their union, a right to abandon themselves to vice, wherever vice will procure them honour, wealth and felicity?

30. On the supposition that laws, as is proved by the constitution of the Jesuits, can do all things with men, is it possible for a people, led to vice by the form of their government, to free themselves from it without some alterations in those laws?

31. Is it enough for a government to be good, that it secures to the inhabitants their properties, lives, and liberties, makes a more equal partition of the riches of a nation, and enables the people more easily to obtain by moderate labour*, a sufficiency for themselves and their families, if the legislation do not at the same time also exalt in the minds of men the sentiment of emulation, and for this effect the state do not propose large rewards for great talents and great virtues? and might not these rewards, always consisting of certain superfluities, and which were formerly the source of so

* To regard the necessity of labour as the consequence of original sin, and a punishment from God, is an absurdity. This necessity is, on the contrary, a favour from heaven. That man must live by the sweat of his brow is a fact. Now to explain a fact so simple, what necessity is there to have recourse to supernatural causes, and constantly represent man as an enigma? If he appeared such formerly, it must be owned that the principle of self-interest has been since so generally received, it has been so clearly proved that this interest is the principle of all our thoughts and actions, that the meaning of the enigma is at least made out,

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many great and noble actions*, again produce the same effects? and can the rewards decreed by government (of what nature soever) be regarded as a luxury of pleasure adapted to corrupt the manners of the people?

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and to explain man, it is no longer necessary, as Pascal pretended to recur to original sin.

* The general principles of our actions are the hope or fear of an approaching pleasure or pain. Men almost always indifferent to remote evils take no pains to avoid them. He who is not unhappy thinks himself in his natural state, and that he can always remain so. The utility of a law that preserves from future evil is rarely perceived. How often have nations been ready to suffer the extinction of certain privileges that alone preserve them from slavery? Liberty, like health, is a blessing whose value is commonly not known till it is lost. Nations, in general, too little anxious for their liberty, have by their indifference frequently furnished tyranny with the means of destroying it.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

OF THE LUXURY OF PLEASURE.

We every day hear of *the corruption of national manners*, what are we to understand by those words? The detachment of private from public interest.

Why does money, that active principle of a rich nation, so often become the principle of corruption? Because the public, as I have already said, is not the sole distributor, and because money in consequence so often becomes the reward of vice. It is not so with the rewards of which the public is the sole dispenser. Always an acknowledgment of the public gratitude, it constantly supposes a service, a benefit rendered to our country, and consequently a virtuous action. Such a gift of whatever nature it be, therefore constantly strengthens the bond between private and public interest.

If either a beautiful slave or concubine become among a people the reward of talents, virtue, or valour, the manners of that people will not be thereby corrupted. It was in the heroic ages that the Cretans imposed on the Athenians the tribute of ten beautiful virgins, from which Theseus released them. It was

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in the ages of their glory and triumphs that the Arabs and Turks exacted similar tributes of the nations which they conquered.

When we read the Celtic poems and romances, those histories, always true, of the manners of a people yet ferocious, we see the Celts arm, in the same manner as the Greeks, for the conquest of beauty; and love, far from enervating their manners, excited them to the boldest enterprizes.

Any pleasure whatever, if it be proposed as the reward of great talents or virtues, may excite the emulation of the people and become the principle of activity and of national happiness. But to effect this, it is necessary that all the inhabitants may equally pretend to it, and that those pleasures being equitably dispensed, may be constantly the recompence of whoever shews the greatest talents in council, the greatest valour in the field, or virtue in private life.

Suppose that banquets were instituted, and that, to rouse the emulation of the citizens, none were admitted to them but men distinguished by their genius, their talents or their actions; nothing would more excite a desire to excel than the hope of obtaining a place at these festivals. This desire would be the stronger as the beauty of these entertainments would be necessarily augmented by the vanity of those that were admitted, and by the ignorance of those that were excluded.

But, it will be said, how many would be made unhappy by their exclusion? Fewer than is imagined. If

If all envy a reward that may be obtained by intrigue and influence, it is because all can pretend to that, but few desire those rewards that cannot be obtained without great labour and great danger.

Far from envying the laurels of Achilles or Homer, the poltroon and the sluggard despise them*. Their comforter, vanity, will not permit them to see in men of great talents or great valour, any thing more than fools, whose pay, like that of sappers and miners, ought to be high, because they expose themselves to great dangers and great labours. It is wise and just, say the poltroon and the sluggard, to pay such men generously, but it would be folly to imitate them.

Envy is common to all, but is a real torment to those only who run the same career; and if envy be to them an evil, it is a necessary evil.

But we would see, they will say, after such a profound knowledge of the human heart and understanding, the problem of an excellent legislation clearly resolved, that there may be excited in all the citizens such principles of activity and application as may lead them to great actions, and in short may render them as happy as possible.

A legislation so perfect would be still nothing more

* Nothing is in general less envied by men of fashion than the talents of a Voltaire or a Turenne; the little efforts they make to attain them, proves in what little esteem they hold them.

than a palace built upon the sand, and the natural inconstancy of man would soon overthrow that edifice, elevated by genius, humanity, and virtue.

CHAP. IV.

THE TRUE CAUSES OF THE ALTERATIONS THAT HAPPEN IN THE LAWS OF DIFFERENT NATIONS.

ARE the many changes that have happened in the different forms of governments to be regarded as the effect of the inconstancy of mankind? What I know of the matter is, that with regard to customs, laws, and prejudices, it is of the obstinacy, and not of the inconstancy of the human mind, that we ought to complain. How much time is often required to convince a nation that a religion is false, and destructive of the national felicity! How much time to abolish a law that is absurd and contrary to the public good!

To produce such alterations it is not enough to be a king; but a courageous and discerning king, and at the same time to be assisted by favourable circumstances.

The eternity, as it may be called of the laws and customs of China is an evidence against the pretended levity of nations. But supposing man be as inconstant

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as he is represented, it would be in the course of his life, that he would manifest his inconstancy. By what cause in fact should laws respected by the grandfather, father, and son, laws that have lasted generations, be abolished at once by man's supposed levity?

Let such laws be established as are conformable to the general interest; and though they may be destroyed by force, sedition, or a concurrence of extraordinary circumstances, they never will by the inconstancy of the human mind*.

I know that laws good in appearance, but evil in effect, are sooner or later abolished. Why? Because in a given time there must arise a man of discernment, who, struck with the incompatibility of such laws with the general happiness, will communicate his discovery to the just spirits of his age.

A discovery of this sort, from the slowness with which truth is propagated, is communicated but by small intervals, and not generally acknowledged till the succeeding

* The work of the laws, they say, should be permanent. Now why are the Saracens, formerly animated by strong passions that often raised them above themselves, no longer what they formerly were? Because their courage and their genius were not the consequence of their legislation, of the union of public and private interest, nor consequently the effect of a wise distribution of temporal pains and punishments. Their virtues had not a foundation so solid: they were the produce of a momentary and religious enthusiasm, which necessarily disappeared with the concourse of singular circumstances that gave it birth.

 generation.

generation. Therefore if ancient laws be thus abolished, it is not the effect of the inconstancy of mankind, but of the discernment of their minds.

When laws are known to be bad, or insufficient, and are only supported by ancient custom, the least pretence is sufficient to destroy them, and the least event will afford it. Is it so with laws really useful? No: for which reason no extensive and polished nation has abolished those that punish murder, robbery, &c.

But the so much admired legislation of Lycurgus, which was taken in part from that of Minos*, lasted

* There are few who believe with Xenophon in the happiness of Sparta. What a dismal occupation, they say, is that of military exercises. What! perpetually in arms! Sparta, they add, was nothing more than a convent. All was there regulated by the sound of a bell. But, I answer, does not the sound of the bell for recreation please the scholar? Is it the bell that renders the monk miserable? When we are well cloathed and fed, and free from discontent, every occupation is equally good, and the most perilous is not the least agreeable. The history of the Goths, the Huns, &c. prove this truth.

A Roman ambassador entered the camp of Attila, and heard the bard celebrate the great actions of the conqueror. He saw the young people ranged round the poet, admire his verses, and leap with transport at the recital of their victories; while the old men tore their hair and exclaimed with tears, *How wretched is our fate! Deprived of strength to fight, there is no longer any happiness for us.*

Felicity therefore inhabits the plains of war as well as the asylums of peace. Why then regard the Lacedæmonians as un-

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only five or six hundred years. It is true: and perhaps it could not last longer*. However excellent the laws of Lycurgus were, and with whatever genius, patriotic virtue, and courage they might inspire the Spartans †, it was impossible in the situation in which

happy? Is there any want they did not gratify? They were it is said, badly fed. As a proof of the contrary they were robust and healthful. If moreover they passed their days in exercises that amused without too much fatiguing them, the Spartans were nearly as happy as they could be, and much more so than weak and meagre peasants, or idle, rich, and dicontented citizens.

* The institutions of Lycurgus, though insensibly altered, were not entirely destroyed but by force. The Romans did not think they had subdued the Spartans till they had banished from among them the remains of that institution which rendered them still formidable to the masters of the world.

† The Lacedæmonians have been celebrated in all ages and histories for their virtue. They have been however frequently reproached with obduracy to their slaves. These republicans, so proud of their liberty, and so haughty in their bravery, in fact treated their slaves with as much cruelty as the Europeans now treat their Negroes. The Spartans must consequently appear virtuous or vicious, according to the point of view in which they are regarded.

Does virtue consist in the love of our country and fellow-citizens? The Spartans were perhaps the most virtuous of all nations.

Does virtue consist in an universal love of mankind? The Spartans were vicious.

How then are we to form a just judgment of them? Examine if at the time that all mankind form but one nation, as the Abbè

Lacedæmon then was, that its legislation should remain longer unchanged.

The Spartans, too few to resist the Persians, would have been sooner or later overwhelmed by their vast armies, if Greece, at that time so fruitful in great men, had not united its forces to repel the common enemy. What was the consequence? Athens and Sparta were then placed at the head of the Grecian confederacy. Scarcely had these two republics by equal efforts of conduct and courage triumphed over the Persians, when the admiration of the universe was divided between them, and this admiration ought and did become the foundation of their jealousy and discord. This jealousy would have produced nothing more than a noble emulation between the two republics, if they had been governed by the same laws; if the limits of their territories had been fixed by immutable bounds; if they had been able to extend them without arming all the other republics against them; and lastly, if they had known no other riches than

St. Pierre wished, it be possible for the patriotic love to be distinct from universal love.

If the happiness of one nation be not to the present time annexed to the unhappiness of another: if we can, for example, improve the manufactures of one nation without injuring the commerce of its neighbours, and exposing their workmen to die of hunger. Now what matters it, when we destroy men, whether it be by the sword or by hunger? *It is certainly much the best to destroy them by the sword, as their sufferings will then be much shorter.*

the

the iron money of which Lycurgus had permitted the use.

The confederation of the Greeks was not founded on so solid a basis. Each republic had its particular constitution. The Athenians were at once warriors and merchants. The wealth gained by commerce enabled them to carry the war into other countries: and in this respect they had a great advantage over the Lacedæmonians.

The latter, poor and proud, saw with concern within what narrow bounds their poverty confined their ambition. The desire to command, a desire so powerful in two rival and warlike republics, rendered their poverty insupportable to the Spartans. They, therefore, became insensibly disgusted with the laws of Lycurgus, and contracted alliances with the Asiatic powers.

The Peloponnesian war then kindled, and they felt more forcibly the want of money; Persia offered it, and they accepted it. It was then that poverty, the key-stone of the edifice of the laws, which Lycurgus had constructed, fell from the arch, and its fall was followed by that of the state. Then their laws and manners changed, and this change, as well as the consequent evils, were not the effect of the inconstancy of the human mind *, but of the different forms of

* It is not the inconstancy of nations, but their ignorance, that so frequently overthrows the edifice of the best laws. It is this that renders a people tractable to the counsels of ambitious men.

government among the Greeks; of the imperfection in the principles of their confederation, and of the liberty they always reserved to make war on each other. Hence that series of events which at last led to their common ruin.

A federative compact ought to be founded on the most solid principles. If a country, as large as France or Paraguay, were to be divided into thirty republics*:

If the true principles of morality be shown to a people, and if the excellence of their laws, and the happiness they produce be demonstrated to them, those laws will be held sacred by them: they will reverence them from a love of felicity which they produce, and from that obstinate attachment which men in general have for ancient customs.

There are no innovations proposed by the ambitious that are not coloured with the pretext of public advantage. An intelligent people, always guarded against such innovations, will always reject them. Among them the interest of a small number that are strong is restrained by the interest of a great number that are weak. The ambition of the former is therefore confined, and the people, always the strongest when they are intelligent, will remain faithful to the legislation that renders them happy.

* Paraguay is an immense country. In the time of the Jesuits this country, if we believe certain accounts, was divided into thirty cantons, governed by the same laws, and the same magistrates, that is, by the same sort of monks. Now if these thirty cantons formed but one empire, whose forces could, by order of the Jesuits, be united against a common enemy, and if the existence of a fact demonstrates its possibility, the suppression of such an empire cannot be absurd.

if

if these republics, governed by the same laws, were leagued together against a foreign enemy: if the bounds of their territories were invariably determined; if they respectively guaranteed to each other their possessions and their liberties; if they moreover, adopted the laws and manners of the Spartans; the junction of their forces and the mutual guarantee of their liberties, would secure them equally from the invasion of foreigners and the tyranny of their countrymen.

Now supposing this legislation the most proper to render the people happy what means are there to secure its perpetual duration? The most certain would be, to order preceptors in their instructions, and magistrates in their public discourses, to demonstrate its excellence*; which being once established, the legislation

* It is necessary, says Machiavel, from time to time, to call back governments to their constituent principles. How is this to be done? By misfortune. It was the ambition of Appius, and the battles of Cannæ and Thrasimena, that recalled the Romans to a love for their country. Nations have in this point no other master than misfortune. They might find one less severe.

For the instruction even of magistrates, why do they not every year, read publicly the history of each law, and the motives of its establishment, and point out to the people those laws to which they principally owe the preservation of their property, liberty and lives? The people love happiness. They would at this lecture, discover the sagacity of their ancestors, and frequently see that laws, in appearance the least important, protect them from indigence and despotism.

Whatever be the pretended inconstancy of the human mind,

gislation would be proof against the inconstancy of the human mind. Men (were they so inconstant as is commonly imagined) could not abrogate established laws, unless they were united in their pursuits. Now such an union supposes them to have a common interest in the destruction, and consequently a great imperfection in the laws.

In every other case the very inconstancy of mankind, by dividing their opinions, opposes the unanimity of their deliberations, and consequently secures the duration of the laws.

O! Sovereigns, make your subjects happy! Consider what will, from their infancy inspire them with a love for the public welfare ; prove to them the goodness of their laws, by the history of all times, and the misery of all nations. Demonstrate to them (for morality is capable of demonstration) that your administration is the best possible, and you will for ever restrain their pretended inconstancy.

If the government of the Chinese, imperfect as it may be, still subsists, and subsists the same, what can destroy that where men are the most happy possible? Nothing but conquest, or the miseries of a people change the form of governments.

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when a nation is made clearly to perceive the reciprocal dependence between its happiness and the preservation of the laws, its inconstancy is sure to be restrained.

Every

Prospect of a perfect legislation.

Every wise legislation that unites private and public interest, and founds virtue on the advantage of each individual, is indestructible. But is such legislation possible? Why not. The horizon of our ideas is every day extended; and if legislation, like the other sciences, shares in the progress of the human mind, why despair of the future felicity of mankind? Why may not nations, as they become every age more enlightened, one day arrive at that plenitude of happiness of which they are capable? It is not without pain that I quit this hope. The felicity of the human race is to a sensible mind the most pleasing of all prospects. When we behold it through the perspective of futurity, it is the work of a perfect legislation. But if any should be hardy enough to lay down the plan, what prejudices it may be said, will he not have to combat and destroy! What dangerous truths to reveal?

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

THE PUBLICATION OF A TRUTH IS FATAL TO HIM ONLY BY WHOM IT IS PUBLISHED.

What is a new truth in morality? A new method of securing or increasing the happiness of nations. What follows from this definition? That truth cannot be prejudicial.

When an author makes a discovery of this kind, who are his enemies?

1. Those whom he contradicts (1).

2. They that envy his reputation.

3. They whose interests are opposite to that of the public.

If a magistrate increase his number of patroles, his enemies will be the robbers on the highway; and if those robbers be powerful, the magistrate will be persecuted. It is the same with the philosopher. If his precepts tend to secure the happiness of the people in general, he will have for his enemies the robbers of the state; and these are to be feared.

Do I discover the intrigues of an avaricious clergy, and disconcert the projects of monastic avidity and ambition? If the monk be powerful, I shall be persecuted.

Do

Arbitrary power does not render a monarch happy.

Do I prove the malversations of the man in power? If my proof be clear, I shall be punished. The vengeance of the strong against the weak is always in proportion to the truth of the accusations. It was of the powerful (2), that Menippus said, "You are angry, Jupiter, you grasp the thunder, but you are wrong." The powerful are commonly cruel in proportion as they are stupid. Let a Turk enter the divan, and declare that the intolerance of Mahometanism depopulates the state and alienates the Greeks: that the despotism of the Grand Signior debases the nation; that the vexations of the pachas dispirit the people; and that the want of discipline renders the army despicable: what name will they give this faithful citizen? That of a seditious man. He will be delivered up to the mutes. Death is at Constantinople the punishment inflicted for revealing a truth, that, reflected on by the Sultan, would save the empire from the ruin that threatens it. The love of virtue, which is there sometimes affected, is always false. In despotic countries all is hypocrisy; we see nothing but masks; no face appears.

In every country where the people are not the ruling power (and in what country are they?) the advocate for the public felicity is the martyr of the truths which he reveals. What is the cause of this? The too great power of some members of society. If a man presents a new opinion to the public: struck with the novelty, and for some time undetermined, the public at first forms no judgment of it. At that time

if the cry of envy, ignorance, and interest are raised against the author of the truth; and he be not protected either by the law, or by people in power, he is lost.

An illustrious man therefore always purchases his future glory by present misfortune. For the rest, his misfortunes themselves and the persecution he suffers more rapidly diffuse his discoveries. Truth always instructive to him who hears it, is detrimental only to him who tells it*.

In morality, it is on a knowledge of the truth that the public felicity depends.

O! Truth, thou art the divinity of noble souls! Virtue can never impute to thee the destructions of empires, and the miseries of mankind. Vices are not the bitter fruits that are gathered from thy branches. When truth shall enlighten princes, happiness and virtue will reign under them in every empire.

* Every truth, says the proverb, is not proper to be told. But what is meant by the word *proper?* It means the same as *safe*. He who speaks the truth doubtless exposes himself to persecution, and is imprudent. Imprudent men are therefore the most useful sort of men. They sow, at their own expence, truths of which their fellow-citizens reap the fruit. The labour is for them and the profit for others; they have therefore been ever regarded as the friends of humanity. It was for others that Curtius leaped into the gulf.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

A KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH IS ALWAYS USEFUL.

MAN always follows his interest, or what he thinks his interest. It is a known fact *that whether we talk or not, the conduct of man will be always the same.* The publication of this truth is not therefore prejudicial. But of what utility can it be? Of the greatest. Being once assured that man always acts in conformity to his interest, the legislature may assign so many punishments to vice, and so many rewards to virtue, that every individual will find it his interest to be virtuous.

Does the legislature know that man, anxious for his preservation, exposes himself with aversion to danger? It may annex so much infamy to cowardice and so much honour to courage, that the soldier on the day of battle will find it more his interest to fight than to fly.

Suppose a man, directed solely by caprice, should dissipate his fortune and leave his children in indigence; what remedy is there for this evil? The contempt with which he ought to be treated. When man and the crimes he may commit are made known to

other men, they will create laws proper to suppress those crimes*, and will at last come to connect private and public interest so closely, that men will be forced to be virtuous.

In every science, we are told, a writer ought to seek and publish the truth. Must the science of morality be an exception? What is the object of ethics? The happiness of the majority. In this respect every new truth is, as I have said, a new mean of meliorating the condition of the people. Is the desire of happiness a crime? Such an opinion cannot be maintained but by the fool void of humanity, and the knave interested in the calamities of the public.

In morality it is the truth alone that should be taught. But may we in no case substitute useful errors? There are none such: as I shall hereafter demonstrate. Religion itself does not make a people happy. The modern Romans are a proof of this. Interest is our sole motive. Men sometimes appear to sacrifice, but never really sacrifice their happiness to that of others. The waters never remount to their source, nor man against the rapid current of his interest. He that should attempt it would be a fool. Such fools are moreover too few to have any influence on the bulk of society. If it be only required

* The legislature in making laws, supposes all men to be wicked, because it would have them all equally subject to these laws.

to

to make virtuous citizens, what need is there to have recourse to impossible and supernatural methods?

Make good laws; they alone will naturally direct the people in the pursuit of the public advantage, by following the irresistible propensity they have to their private advantage. It is not the vices of intemperance and improbity, that make a people miserable, but the imperfection and consequently the stupidity of their laws. It is of little consequence that men be vicious; it is enough that they be intelligent. An awful and salutary fear will keep them within the bounds of their duty. Thieves have laws among themselves, and few of them violate those laws, because they inspect and suspect each other. Laws do every thing. If some God, say on this subject the philosophers of Siam, were really to descend from heaven to instruct mankind in the science of morality, he would give them a good legislation, and that legislation, would compel them to be virtuous. In morals, as in physics, it is always on a large scale, and by simple methods, that the Divinity operates.

It results from this chapter, that truth, often odious to the powerful and unjust, is always useful to the public. But are there not periods when its promulgation may produce troubles in an empire?

CHAP. VII.

THE PROMULGATION OF TRUTH CAN NEVER PRODUCE TROUBLES IN AN EMPIRE.

An administration is bad, the people suffer, they complain. At that moment a work appears that shews them all their misery. The people are irritated and rise. Be it so. But is this work the cause of their insurrection? No: it is the epoch only. The cause is the public misery. If the work had appeared sooner, the government by being sooner informed might have alleviated the sufferings of the people, and prevented the sedition. Disorder does not accompany the promulgation of the truth, except in countries entirely despotic; because in those countries the time at which men dare to speak the truth, is that when, the miseries of the people becoming insupportable, they are no longer able to restrain their complaints.

When a government becomes cruel to excess, their troubles are salutary. They are the pangs which a medicine gives to the patient whom it cures. To free a people from servitude, sometimes fewer men are sacrificed than perish at a public rejoicing badly conducted. The evil of an insurrection is in the cause

that produces it; the pain of a crisis is in the disorder that excites it. When men fall under despotism, they must make efforts to shake it off, and those efforts are, at that period, the only property the unfortunate people have left. The height of misery is not to be able to deliver ourselves from it, and to suffer without daring to complain. Where is the man barbarous and stupid enough to give the name of peace to the silence, the forced tranquillity of slavery! It is indeed peace, but it is the peace of the tomb.

The publication of a truth is therefore sometimes the epoch, but never the cause of disorders and insurrecuions. The knowledge of the truth is always useful to the oppressed, and even to the oppressors. It informs them, as I have said, of the discontents of the people. In Europe the murmurs of a people precede their revolt at a great distance.

The complaints of a nation are the thunder heard at a distance, and not yet to be feared. The sovereign has yet time to repair his injustice, and to reconcile himself with his people. It is not so in a country of slaves. It is with the poignard in hand that remonstrances are presented to the Sultan. The silence of slaves is terrible. It is the calm that precedes a hurricane. The winds are yet hushed. But from the dark bosom of an immoveable cloud bursts the thunder, the signal of the tempest, which strikes at the moment the flash appears.

The silence that force compels is the principal cause of

of the miseries of nations, and of the destruction of their oppressors. If the search after truth be hurtful, it is never so to any one but its author. This Buffon, Quesnoy, and Montesquieu have found. Men have long disputed about the preference to be given to the ancients or moderns: to the French or Italian music: those disputes have enlightened the people without arming any one citizen. But those disputes, it will be said, relate to frivolous objects only. Be it so. But without a fear of the law men would cut each other's throats for trifles. Theological disputes, always reducible to questions about words, are proofs of this. What streams of blood have they occasioned. Can I, with the sanction of the law, give the name of holy zeal to the fury of my vanity? There is no excess to which it will not lead me. Religious cruelty is atrocious. Whence does it proceed? Can it be from the novelty of a theological opinion (3). No: from the licentious and unpunishable use of intolerance (4).

In discussing a question where every one is free to deliver his sentiments, to contradict and be contradicted in turn, if any one that insults another be punished according to the degree of the offence; the pride of the disputant being thus restrained by the law, ceases to be inhuman.

But by what inconsistency does the magistrate, who ties the hands of the citizens and forbids acts of violence in discussing a matter of interest or opinion, untie them in a scholastic dispute? To what is this owing?

ing? To the spirit of superstition and fanaticism, which preside much oftener at the formation of laws than the spirit of justice and humanity.

I have read the histories of the different forms of worship; I have enumerated their absurdities; I have been ashamed of human reason, and blushed to be a man. I am astonished at the evils that superstition has produced, and at the facility with which that fanaticism might be stifled, which will ever render religions so fatal to mankind (5); and I have concluded that the miseries of the people may always be referred to the imperfection of their laws, and consequently to the ignorance of some moral truths. These truths, always useful, cannot disturb the peace of states, of which the slowness of their progress is another proof.

CHAP. VIII.

OF THE SLOWNESS WITH WHICH TRUTH IS PROPAGATED.

THE advances of truth are slow, as experience proves.

When did the parliament of Paris revoke the punishment of death decreed to every one who should teach any other philosophy than that of Aristotle?

Fifty

Fifty years after that philosophy was forgotten.

When did the faculty of medicine admit the doctrine of the circulation of the blood?

Fifty years after its discovery by Harvey.

When did the same faculty admit potatoes to be wholesome?

A hundred years after it had been proved by experience, and when the parliament had revoked the decree which forbade the use of that root*.

When will physicians agree about the advantages of inoculation? In twenty years, or thereabout.

A hundred facts of this nature prove the slow progress of truth; its progress however is such as it ought to be.

A truth by being new always shocks some opinion or custom generally established: it has at first but few

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* The parliament issued a like decree against emetics, and against Brissot the physician, in the sixteenth century. That physician, contrary to the common practice, bled in the pleurisy on the side where the patient suffered most. This new practice was denounced to parliament by the old physicians. He was declared impious, and forbidden to bleed for the future on the side where the pleurisy was. The affair being reported to Charles V. he was going to issue a similar decree, but it happened at the instant that Charles III. duke of Savoy died of the pleurisy after having been bled in the ancient manner. Is it for magistrates to pretend, like the theologians, to judge of books and sciences they know nothing about. What do they get by it? Ridicule.

partizans;

partizans: it is treated as a paradox*, cited as an error, and rejected without being understood. Mankind in general approve or condemn by chance; and truth itself is received by most of them like error, from prejudice, and without examination.

By what method then does a new opinion come to be generally known? When men of sound understanding have discovered the truth, they make it public; it is thus promulgated, and becoming every day more common is at last generally received; but it is a long time after its discovery, especially if it be a moral truth.

The reason why men with so much difficulty assent to moral truths, is because they sometimes require the sacrifice not only of our prejudices, but of our personal interest also; and few men are capable of this double oblation. Besides, a truth of this sort discovered by a fellow-citizen may spread rapidly, and load him with honours. Our envy thererefore would be shocked by its success, and ought to hasten its condemnation. It is the stranger who now celebrates the moral works written and proscribed in France. To judge these books, a man should be endowed at once

* If an excellent philosophical work appear, the first judgment which envy forms of it is, that its principles are false and dangerous; the second, that the ideas it contains are common. Unlucky is the work on which too much praise is bestowed at first. The silence of envy and stupidity declare its want of merit.

with

with a degree of discernment and a degree of unconcern necessary to distinguish the true from the false. Now men of discernment are every where rare, and disinterested men, still rarer, are to be found only among foreigners. Moral truths are propagated by very slow undulations. The progress of truth on the earth, may be compared with the fall of a stone in a lake: the water separates at the point of contact, and forms a circle that is soon surrounded by a greater, and that by circles more large and continually increasing, till at last they break against the shore. It is thus that a moral truth extending from circle to circle, to the different classes of citizens, comes at last to be acknowledged by all who have no interest in rejecting it.

To establish a truth it is sufficient that men in power do not oppose its promulgation ; and it is in this that truth differs from error. It is by force that the latter is propagated : it is sword in hand that the truth of almost all religions is authenticated, and it is by that they become the scourge of the moral world.

Truth without the aid of force is certainly established but slowly, but at the same time without commotion. The only people among whom truth finds a difficult admittance, are the ignorant nations. Idiotism is much less tractable than is commonly imagined.

If an useful but new law be proposed to an ignorant people (6), that law, by being rejected without examination, may even excite a sedition (7). For a people

ple who are stupid because they are slaves, are the more irritable from being frequently irritated by despotism.

If on the contrary the same law be proposed to an enlightened people, where the press is free, where its utility is foreseen and its promulgation desired, it will be there received with gratitude by the intelligent part of the nation, and that part will restrain the other.

It results from this chapter that truth, even by the slowness with which it is propagated, cannot produce disorder in a state. But are there not forms of government, to which a knowledge of the truth may be dangerous?

CHAP. IX.

OF GOVERNMENT.

If every moral truth be nothing more than *a method of increasing or securing the happiness of the majority, and if the object of all government be the public felicity,* there can be no moral truth whose publication is not desirable (8). All diversity of opinion on this subject arises from the vague signification of the word *government.* What is government? An assemblage of laws or conventions made between people of the same nation.

nation. Therefore these laws and conventions are either conformable or contrary to the general interest. There are therefore only two forms of government, the one good, the other bad : to these two sorts I reduce them all. Now in the assemblage of conventions by which they are constituted, to say that we cannot alter laws detrimental to a nation ; that they are sacred, and cannot be legitimately laid aside, is to say that we cannot alter a regimen detrimental to health, and that a wound should not be cleansed, but suffered to gangrene (9).

If all government, moreover, of whatever nature it be, can have no other object than the happiness of the majority, nothing that tends to render them happy can be contrary to their government (10). He alone can oppose every useful reformation in the state, who, founding his grandeur on the debasement and misery of his fellow-citizens, would usurp an arbitrary power over them. But the honest man, the friend of truth and of his country, can have no interest contrary to that of his nation. When we are happy in the happiness of an empire, and glorious in its glory, we secretly desire the correction of every abuse. A science is not annihilated by being improved, nor a government destroyed by being reformed.

Suppose that in Portugal more respect were paid to the property, the lives, and liberty of the subjects, would the government be less monarchical? Suppose they were there to suppress the inquisition, and the

lettres

lettres de cachet, and limit the exercise and authority of certain places, would they thereby change the form of government? No: they would correct its abuses only. What virtuous monarch would not promote such reformation! Are the monarchs of Europe to be compared to the stupid sultans of Asia, to those vampires who suck the blood of their subjects, and whom all opposition exasperates? To suspect a virtuous prince of adopting the principles of oriental despotism, is to do him the most atrocious injury. A discerning sovereign will never esteem an arbitrary power, whether it be of one, as in Turkey; or of several, as in Poland, to be the real constitution of a state; to honour a cruel despotism with that title, is to give the name of government to a gang of robbers (11), who, under the banner of one, or several, ravage the provinces which they inhabit.

Every act of arbitrary power is unjust. A power acquired and maintained by force (12), is a power that force has a right to repel. A nation, whatever name its enemy may bear, has a right to attack and destroy it.

To conclude; if the object of the sciences of morality and politics be reduced to the search after means of rendering men happy, there are no truths of this sort whose knowledge is dangerous.

But does the happiness of a people constitute that of a sovereign?

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

THE HAPPINESS OF THE PRINCE IS NOT CONNECTED WITH THE MISERY OF THE PEOPLE, UNDER ANY FORM OF GOVERNMENT.

THAT arbitrary right for which some monarchs appear so anxious, is nothing more than a luxury of power, which, without adding any thing to their own happiness, makes their people miserable. The happiness of a prince is independent of his despotism. It is frequently in compliance with his favourites, for the pleasure or convenience of five or six persons, that a sovereign enslaves his people and exposes his throat to the poignard of conspiracy.

Portugal informs us of the dangers to which, even in this age, kings are exposed. Arbitrary power, that calamity of nations, does not therefore secure either the felicity or life of a monarch. His happiness is not therefore essentially connected with the misery of his people. Why refrain to tell this truth to princes, and suffer them to be ignorant that a limited monarchy is the most desirable of all monarchies (13); that a sovereign is only great in the greatness of his people, strong in their strength, and rich in their wealth ; that his interest, rightly understood, is essentially connected with

theirs; and, in short, that it is his duty to render them happy?

"By the fortune of war, said an Indian to Tamer-"lane, we are thine. Art thou a merchant? Sell us. "Art thou a butcher? Kill us. Art thou a monarch? "Make us happy."

Is there a sovereign who can without horror hear the celebrated speech of an Arab incessantly murmur in his ear? This man, bowed down by the weight of taxes, was unable to maintain himself and his family. He laid his complaints before the caliph. The caliph was enraged: the Arab condemned to die. As he was going to execution he met an officer escorting provisions? For whom are those provisions? said the condemned wretch. For the caliph's dogs, replied the officer. *How much better is the condition of a tyrant's dogs*, cried the Arab, *than that of his subjects!*

What prince of discernment could bear such a reproach; or would, by usurping an arbitrary power over his subjects, condemn himself to live among none but slaves?

A man in presence of his tyrant has no opinion and no character. Thamas Kouli Kan supped with a favourite. A new sort of pulse was served up. There is nothing more pleasing and wholesome than this sort of pulse, said the monarch. Nothing more pleasing and wholesome, said the courtier. After supper Kouli Kan found himself indisposed, he could not sleep. When he arose, he said, There is nothing more detes-

 table

table and more unwholesome than that pulse. Nothing more detestable and unwholesome, said the courtier. But you did not think so last night, said the prince: what has made you change your opinion? My respect and my dread, replied the courtier: I can curse the food with impunity. I am the slave of your highness and not of the pulse.

The despot is a Gorgon: he petrifies a man even to his thoughts*, and like the Gorgon is a terror to the world.

* What prince, even among the Christians, would, after the example of the caliph Hakkam, permit a magistrate to tell him of his injustice!

" A poor woman possessed, at Zehra, a small piece of land con-" tiguous to the gardens of Hakkam, which that prince desired " to enlarge, and proposed to the woman to give up her land. " She refused, being desirous of preserving the heritage of her " forefathers. The intendant of the gardens took possession of the " ground which the woman would not sell.

" The woman, bathed in tears, went to implore justice at Cor-" dova, of which Ibn Bechir was cadi. The text of the law was " plainly in favour of the woman. But what can the law do with " those that think themselves above it? Ibn Bechir however did " not despair of her cause. He mounted his ass, and taking with " him a sack of an enormous size, presented himself in that condi-" tion before Hakkam, who was then seated under a pavillion " built on the ground of the woman.

" The arrival of the cadi, and the sack he bore on his shoulder, " astonished the prince. Ibn Bechir prostrated himself before " Hakkam, and begged permission to fill his sack with the earth on " which he stood. The caliph consented. The sack being filled, " the cadi entreated the prince to help him up with it on his ass.

world. Is his condition then desirable? Despotism is a yoke equally galling to those who bear it, and to him that imposes it. Let the army abandon the tyrant, and the vilest among his slaves becomes his equal, strikes him and says:

> Ta force étoit ton droit, ta foiblesse est ton crime.
> Thy strength was thy right, thy weakness is thy crime.

But if a prince, through a wrong conception of this matter, place his happiness in the acquirement of arbitrary power, and a writing, which declares the intention of the prince, inform the people of the miseries that threaten them, is not this writing sufficient to excite discontent and insurrections? No: the fatal effects of despotism have been every where execrated. The Roman history, the holy Scripture itself, delineate in a hundred places a most horrid picture of tyranny, and yet the reading of these has never excited any revolution. It is the actual, multiplied, and durable evils of despotism, that sometimes give a people the courage necessary to deliver themselves from the yoke. It is

" This demand confounded Hakkam. The sack is too heavy, he " said. Prince, replied Ibn Bechir, with a noble boldness, if you " find this sack so heavy which contains only a part of the land you " have unjustly taken from one of your subjects, how will you, at " the day of judgment, bear the whole land you have unjustly " seized? Hakkam, far from punishing the cadi, generously ac- " knowledged his fault, and restored the woman her land, with " all the buildings he had constructed on it."

 always

always the cruelty of sultans that provokes sedition. All the Eastern thrones are stained with the blood of their masters. Who has spilt it? Their slaves.

The mere publication of the truth occasions no strong commotion; besides, the advantage of peace depends on the price at which it is purchased. War is doubtless an evil; but to avoid it, should men suffer their property, their lives, and liberty to be taken from them? A hostile prince comes, with arms in hand, to reduce a people to slavery; should this people present their necks to the yoke? He that proposes it is infamous. By whatever name he may call himself who would rob me of my liberty, I ought to defend it against him.

There is no state not susceptible of improvement, often as necessary as disagreeable to certain persons. Does administration forbear to make it? Must we under the happy hope of a false tranquillity, sacrifice to the people in power the public welfare, and under vain pretence of preserving the peace, abandon the empire to the robbers who would plunder it?

There are, as I have said, necessary evils. No cure is to be had without pain: when we suffer in the treatment, it is less the effect of the remedy than of the disease.

A timid conduct, and mean procrastination, have been often more fatal to communities than sedition itself. We may, without offending a virtuous prince, set bounds to his authority; represent to him that the

law

law which declares the public welfare the first of laws, is sacred and inviolable, and ought to be respected even by him; that all other laws are nothing more than the several means of securing the execution of that law; and in short, that as he must be always unhappy in the unhappiness of his subjects, there is a reciprocal dependence between the felicity of the people and that of the sovereign. Hence I conclude:

That the object really detrimental to him, is the falsehood which hides from him the disorder of the state; and the object really advantageous to him, is the truth that informs him of the manner of treating its disorder.

The revelation of this truth is therefore useful: but does a man, they will say, owe it to other men, when it is so dangerous to reveal it to them?

CHAP. XI.

WE OWE THE TRUTH TO THE PEOPLE.

If on this subject I were to consult St. Augustine, and St. Ambrose, I would say with the first, "Does truth "become a subject of scandal? Let the scandal rise, "and let the truth be spoken *".

I should repeat after the second: "He is to be es"teemed a defender of truth, who, as soon as he per"ceives it, speaks it without shame or fear †".

I should lastly add, "That the truth may be for a "time concealed, but cannot be defeated ‡".

But there is here no want of authority: what we owe to celebrated men is respect, and not credulity. We should therefore scrupulously examine their opinions; and that examination made, we should judge according to our reason, and not according to theirs. I believe the three angles of a triangle to be equal to

* Si de veritate scandalum, utilius permittitur nasci scandalum quam veritas relinquatur.

† Ille veritatis defensor esse debet qui cum recte sentit, loqui non metuit, nec erubescit.

‡ Occultari potest ad tempus veritas, vinci non potest. St, Aug.

too

two right-angles, not because Euclid says it, but because I can demonstrate it to be true.

If we would know whether we really owe the truth to mankind, let us ask the men in place themselves; they will all agree that it is important to them to know it, and that the knowledge of it alone provides them with the means of increasing and securing the public felicity. Now if every man, in quality of a citizen, ought to contribute all in his power to the happiness of his countrymen, whenever he knows the truth he ought to speak it.

To ask if we owe the truth to mankind, is to ask by an obscure and circumlocutory turn of expression, if it be allowable to be virtuous, and to do good to our brethren.

But the obligation to speak the truth supposes the possibility of discovering it: governments therefore ought to facilitate the means, and of all others the most certain is the liberty of the press.

CHAP. XII.

OF THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.

It is to contradiction, and consequently to the liberty of the press, that physics owes its improvements. Had this liberty never subsisted, how many errors, consecrated by time, would be cited as incontestible axioms! What is here said of physics is applicable to morality and politics. If we would be sure of the truth of our opinions, we should make them public. It is by the touchstone of contradiction that we must prove them. The press therefore should be free. The magistrate who prevents it, opposes all improvement in morality and politics; he sins against his country*; he choaks the very seed of those happy ideas which the liberty of the press would produce: and who can estimate that loss? Of this we are certain, that a free people, a people who think, will always command the people who do not think †.

* He who would submit his ideas to the examination and judgment of his fellow-citizens, ought to publish all that he thinks true and useful: to conceal it is a sign of criminal indifference.

† Who forbids the foreigner to speak and write freely? How

A prince

A prince therefore owes to his nation the truth, as being useful; and the liberty of the press, as the means of discovering it. Wherever that liberty is withheld, ignorance, like a profound darkness, is spread over the minds of men. It is then that the lovers of truth, at the same time they seek it, fear to find it: they are sensible that they must either conceal and basely disguise it, or expose themselves to persecution; which every man dreads. If it be always the interest of the public to know the truth, it is not always the interest of a private person to speak it.

Most governments even exhort the people to a search after the truth; but almost all punish them for making it public. Now few men will for a long time brave the resentment of power, from a pure love to mankind and the truth; and consequently there are few masters who reveal it to their scholars. Thus the learning now taught in the colleges and seminaries is reduced to the reading of certain legends, and to the knowledge of some sophisms proper to encourage superstition, to render the mind false and the heart inhuman. Men should have another education; it is time that these trifles give place to solid instruction; that men be taught what they owe to themselves, to their neighbours, and to their country; that they be

unjust and defective is the government that makes this prohibition? The English is generally regarded as the best, and it is there that the citizen is the most free in this respect.

 convinced

convinced of the absurdity of religious disputes *; the interest they have in improving their morals, and consequently in securing the liberty of thinking and writing.

But what whimsieal opinions will not sueh a liberty produce? No matter. These opinions being destroyed by reason as soon as produeed by caprice, will make no alteration in the tranquillity of a state. There are no specious pretences with which hypocrisy and tyranny have not coloured their desire of imposing silence on men of diseernment; and no virtuous eitizen can see in these vain pretences any legitimate reason for remaining silent.

This publication of the truth can be displeasing to those impostors only, who, too frequently gaining the attention of prinees, represent an enlightened people as factious, and a brutal people as doeile. But what does experience teaeh us eoneerning this matter? That every intelligent people are deaf to the idle declamations of fanaticism, and shocked by all aets of injustiee.

When a man is deprived of his property and liberty, and threatened with the loss of life itself, he beeomes

* For what reason should a free inquiry about religion be forbidden? If it be true, it will stand the test of examination: if it be false, how absurd is it to protect a religion whose morality is pusillanimous and cruel, and whose worship is a charge to the state from the excessive expence in maintaining its ministers?

exasperated; it is then that the slave arms against his master. Truth has no enemies but the enemies of the public: bad men alone oppose its promulgation.

To conclude, it is no great matter to shew that truth is useful; that man owes it to man; and that the press ought to be free: we should also point out the evils produced in empires by an indifference to the truth.

CHAP. XIII.

OF THE EVILS PRODUCED BY AN INDIFFERENCE FOR THE TRUTH.

In the political, as in the human body, a certain degree of fermentation is necessary to support motion and life. An indifference to glory and the truth produces a stagnation in the soul and the mind. Every nation that by the form of its government, or the stupidity of its ministers, comes to this state of indifference is barren in great talents, as well as in great virtues*.

* The virtues fly the country from which truth is banished; they will not inhabit the land where the title of the Sun of Justice is given to the most unjust and most cruel tyrants, and where their

Let

Let us take the Indians for an example: what men are these, when compared to the active and industrious inhabitants of the Seine, the Rhine, or the Thames!

The Indian plunged in ignorance, indifferent to truth, wretched at home, and feeble abroad, is the slave of a despot, equally incapable of leading him to happiness in peace, or to an enemy in war*. What difference between modern India and that country which, formerly so renowned, and cited as the nursery of the arts and sciences, was peopled with men greedy of glory and of discoveries? The contempt in which this people are held shews the contempt that all nations are to expect, who like them lie plunged in indolence and an indifference for glory.

Whoever regards ignorance as favourable to government, and error as useful, mistakes their produc-

panegyrics are pronounced by terror. What ideas can wretched courtiers form of virtue in countries where princes the most feared are most praised.

* When there is a war in the East, the sophi, retiring to his seraglio, commands his slaves to go and be killed for him on the frontiers: he will not even deign to conduct them. Can it be, says Machiavel, that a monarch shall abandon to his favourites, the most noble of his functions, that of commanding his armies? Can he be ignorant that others being interested in prolonging their command, will for that reason prolong the war? But what a loss of men and money is occasioned by this prolongation; and to what a reverse is a victorious nation exposed, that neglects the opportunity of totally crushing an enemy,

tions:

tions: he has not consulted history; he does not know that an error, useful for the present, too frequently contains the seeds of the greatest calamities.

A white cloud ascends above the mountains; it is the experienced mariner alone who beholds it as the forerunner of a hurricane, and hastens to a place of shelter: he knows that, descending from the summit of the mountain, the cloud will extend itself over the plain, and soon veil the sky, yet bright and serene, with a frightful night of tempests.

Error is the white cloud in which few men see the evils that it portends. These evils, hidden from the fool, are perceived by the wise man: he knows that a single error is sufficient to degrade a people, and obscure the whole horizon of their ideas; and yet an erroneous conception of the Divinity has frequently produced this effect.

Error, dangerous in itself, is still more so by propagation: one produces many. Every man compares, more or less, his ideas together. If he adopt a false idea, that, united with others, produces such as are necessarily false, which, combining again with all those that his memory contains, give to all of them a greater or less tinge of falsehood. Theological errors are a proof of this: one of them is alone sufficient to infect the whole mass of a man's ideas, and produce an infinity of capricious, monstrous, and always unexpected ideas; for the birth of monsters can never be predicted before their delivery.

Errors

Multiplicity and inconsistency of errors.

Errors are of a thousand kinds. Truth, on the contrary, is uniform and simple ; its progress is always similar and consistent. A discerning mind previously discovers the route it ought to take *: it is not so with error. Always inconsistent and irregular in its course, we lose sight of it every instant ; its appearances are always unforeseen, and therefore we cannot predict its effects. To stifle the seeds † of error, the legislature cannot too much excite men to the search after truth.

Every vice, say the philosophers, is an error of the understanding. Crimes and prejudices are brothers ; truth and virtue are sisters. But who are the parents of truth ? Contradiction and dispute. Liberty of thought bears the fruit of truth ; this liberty elevates the soul, and engenders sublime thoughts ; fear on the contrary, debases the soul, so that it can produce none but mean ideas.

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* The principles of a judicious minister being known, we may, in almost all circumstances, predict his conduct. That of a fool is not to be divined. It is by a visit, a word, a fit of impatience, he is determined, and hence the proverb, *that God only knows what a fool will do.*

† Should we, to destroy error, compel it to silence ? No : how then ? Let us talk on. Error, obscure of itself, is rejected by every sound understanding. If time has not given it credit, and it be not favoured by government, it cannot bear the aspect of examination. Reason will ultimately direct wherever it be freely exercised.

However

However useful truth may be, a people being led to their ruin by the imperfection of their government, cannot avoid it but by a great change in their government, laws, manners, and customs, should the legislature attempt it? Should it make the present generation miserable to merit the esteem of posterity? Should that truth be heard which would advise men to secure the felicity of future generations by the misfortune of the present?

CHAP. XIV.

THE HAPPINESS OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IS NEVER CONNECTED WITH THE MISERY OF THE PRESENT GENERATION.

To shew the absurdity of such a supposition, let us see of what the present generation, as it is called, is composed.

1. Of a great number of children who have not yet contracted habits.

2. Of youths who can easily change their habits.

3. Of men, many of whom have already foreseen and approved the reformation proposed.

4. Of old men, to whom every change of opinions and habit is really insupportable.

What

The public welfare should be preferred to that of individuals.

What results from this enumeration? That a wise reformation in manners, laws and government may displease old men, those that are weak and slaves to custom, but that it will be useful to future generations, and also to the greatest number of those who compose the present generation, and consequently can never be contrary to the present and general state of a nation.

Besides every one knows that the perpetuity of abuses in an empire is not the effect of our compassion for old men, but the ill-judged interest of people in power; these, equally indifferent to the happiness of the present* and future generations, would have all sacrificed to their most trifling caprice. They would have it so, and are obeyed.

How exalted soever the station of a man may be, to the nation and not to him the first regard is due. God, we are told, died for the salvation of all men: we should not therefore sacrifice the happiness of all to the caprice of one. All personal interest should be sacrificed to that of the community. But it will be said, these sacrifices are sometimes cruel; yes, when they are executed by the stupid and inhuman. When the public welfare requires the misfortune of an indi-

* A wise government always provides in the happiness of the present generation for that of future generations. It has been said of youth and age, that the one foresees too much, and the other too little: that to-day is the mistress of the young man, and to-morrow that of the old one. It is after the manner of old men that states should conduct themselves.

vidual,

vidual, every compassion is due to his misery; there are no means to alleviate it that should not be employed; it is then that the justice and humanity of a prince should be exerted: all the unfortunate have a right to his beneficence; he should commiserate their sufferings. Miserable is the state of the insensible and cruel man who refuses the citizen even the consolation of complaining. Lamentation, common to all that suffer, all that breathe, is always lawful.

I would not have the lamentations of the unfortunate stop the progress of the prince in his pursuit of the public good; but I would have him in his progress dry up the tears of misery, and prone to pity, be prevented by the love of his country alone from consulting the happiness of individuals.

Such a prince, always the friend of the distressed, and always employed in promoting the happiness of his subjects, will never regard the publication of the truth as dangerous.

What is to be concluded from the foregoing observations on this question?

That the discovery of the truth, always useful to the public, is never pernicious to any but its author.

That the publication of the truth does not affect the peace of states; that the slowness of its progress alone is a security against any such consequence.

That under every form of government it is important to know the truth.

Conclusions from the preceding observations.

That there are properly but two sorts of governments, the one good, and the other bad.

That in neither of them the happiness of the prince is connected with the misery of his subjects.

That if truth be useful we owe it to mankind.

That consequently all governments ought to facilitate the means of discovering the truth.

That the most sure of all others is the liberty of the press.

That the sciences owe their improvemets to that liberty.

That an indifference for the truth is a source of error, and error a source of public calamities.

That no friend to the truth will propose the sacrifice of the felicity of the present generation to that of the future generation.

That such an hypothesis is impossible.

Lastly, that it is from the sole publication of the truth we are to expect the future happiness of mankind.

The consequence of these several propositions is, that no one having a right to promote the misfortune of the state, no one has a right to oppose the publication of the truth, and especially of the first principles of morality.

If a man by means of force usurps the power of a nation, from that moment the nation is plunged into an ignorance of its true interests; the only laws adopted are those that favour avarice, and the tyranny of

the men in power; the public cause remains without protectors. Such is in most kingdoms the actual state of the people. This state is the more dreadful as it requires ages to free men from it.

That besides, those interested in the miseries of a people fear no approaching revolution. Error is not to be subdued by the attack of truth, but by the stroke of power. The time of its destruction will be when the prince unites his interest with that of the public; till then it is in vain to present the truth to mankind? it will be always misunderstood. If we are guided in our conduct and belief by nothing but the interest of the present moment, how shall we by its uncertain and variable glimmer distinguish truth from falsehood?

CHAP. XV.

THE SAME OPINIONS APPEAR TRUE OR FALSE, ACCORDING TO THE INTEREST WE HAVE TO BELIEVE THEM THE ONE OR THE OTHER.

ALL men agree in the truth of geometrical propositions; is it because they are demonstrated? No: but because men have no interest in taking the false

for the true. If they had such an interest, the propositions most evidently demonstrated would appear to them problematical ; they would prove, on occasion, that the contained is greater than the container : this is a fact of which some religions afford examples.

If a Catholic divine propose to prove that there are sticks that have not two ends, nothing is to him more easy; he will first distinguish sticks into two sorts, the one material, the other spiritual. He will then deliver an obscure dissertation on the nature of spiritual sticks, and conclude that the existence of these sticks is a mystery above, yet not contrary to reason: and then this self-evident proposition*, "that there is no "stick without two ends," becomes problematical.

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* Every one talks of evidence : and as this opportunity presents, I shall endeavour to annex a determinate idea to the word. *Evidence* comes from the Latin word *videre, to see.* I see that an ell is longer than a foot. Every fact therefore that I can ascertain by my senses is to me evident. But is it so to those that cannot ascertain it by the same means ? No ; hence I conclude, that a proposition generally evident is nothing more than a fact, of which all men can equally and at every instant verify the existence.

That two bodies and two bodies make four bodies, is a proposition evident to all men ; because all can at every instant ascertain the truth of it : but that there is in the stables of the king of Siam an elephant eight yards high, is evident to all those who have seen it, but not to me, nor to those who have not measured it. This proposition therefore cannot be cited either as evident, or as probable. It is in reality more reasonable to suppose that ten wit-

It

Absurdity of many theological arguments.

It is the same, says an English author on this subject, with the most obvious truths of morality : the most evident is, " that with regard to crimes, the " punishment should be personal, and that I ought not " to be punished for a robbery committed by my neigh- " bour."

Yet how many theologians are there who still maintain that God punishes in the present race of mankind the sins of their first parent*.

To conceal the absurdity of this reasoning they add, that the justice of Heaven is not that of the earth : but if the justice of Heaven be true (14), and be not that of the earth, man then lives in ignorance of what justice is ; he therefore can never know if the action which he thinks equitable be not unjust, and if robbery and murder are not virtue (15). What then become of the principles of the natural law of morality ? How can we be sure of their equity, and distinguish an honest man from villain ?

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nesses of this fact were either deceived, or that they exaggerate, or lastly, that they falsified, than it is to believe that there should be an elephant of twice the common height.

* Why, said a missionary to a learned Chinese, do you admit nothing but a blind destiny ? Because, he replied, we cannot think that an intelligent Being can be unjust and punish in one just come into the world a crime committed 6000 years since by his father Adam. Your stupid piety makes God to be an intelligent and unjust Being : ours, in fact more enlightened, makes him a blind destiny.

CHAP. XVI.

INTEREST MAKES US ESTEEM IN OURSELVES EVEN THAT CRUELTY WHICH WE DETEST IN OTHERS.

All the nations of Europe regard with horror those priests of Carthage, whose barbarity enclosed living children in the burning statue of Saturn or Moloch. There is no Spaniard however who does not respect the same cruelty in himself and his inquisitors. To what must we attribute this contradiction? To the veneration which a Spaniard has for a monk from his infancy. To divest himself of this habitual veneration, he must consult his reason, expose himself at once to the fatigue of attention, and the hatred of those monks. The Spaniard is therefore compelled, by the combined interest of fear and idleness, to revere in the Dominican the barbarity which he detests in the Mexican priest. I shall doubtless be told, that the difference of religions changes the essence of things, and that an enormous cruelty in one religion is a respectable action in another.

I shall not reply to this absurdity; but only observe, that the same interest which, for example, makes me love

love and respect in one country, the cruelty I hate and despise in others, ought also to fascinate the eyes of my reason in other respects, and frequently exaggerate the contempt due to certain viees.

Avarice is an example of this. When a miser contents himself with giving nothing, and saving what he has aequired, and is in other respeets guilty of no injustice, he is perhaps of all bad men the least injurious to society; the evil he does is properly nothing more than an omission of the good he might do. If of all the vices avarice be the most generally detested, it is the effect of an avidity common to almost all men, it is beeause men hate those from whom they can expect nothing. The greedy misers rail at sordid misers.

CHAP. XVII.

INTEREST CAUSES CRIMES TO BE HONOURED.

Whatever imperfect notions men may have of virtue, there are few who respect robbery, murder, the poisoner, or the parricide? and yet the whole church constantly honours these crimes in its proteetors. I shall cite for example Constantine and Clovis.

The former, without regard to the sanctity of oaths,

caused his brother-in-law Licinius to be assassinated; massacred his nephew Licinius at the age of twelve years; put to death his son Crispus, who was illustrious for his virtues; cut the throat of his father-in-law Maximian at Marseilles, and suffocated his wife Fausta in a bath. The authenticity of these crimes forced the Pagans to exclude this emperor from their feasts and initiations; and the virtuous Christians received him into their church. As to the ferocious Clovis, he beat out the brains of the two brothers Regnacaire and Richemer, who were both his relations. But he was liberal to the church, and Savaron proves the sanctity of Clovis. The church, it is true, has not made a saint either of Clovis or Constantine, but in them it has at least honoured two men polluted by the most enormous crimes.

Whatever extends the dominions of the church always appears innocent in its eyes: Pepin is a proof. The pope at his desire passed from Italy to France; on his arrival he anointed Pepin, and crowned in him an usurper who kept his lawful king shut up in the convent of St. Martin, and the son of his master in the convent of Fontenelle in Normandy. But this coronation, it will be said, was the crime of the pope, and not that of the church. The silence of the prelates was a secret approbation of the pope's conduct. Without this tacit consent the pope, in an assembly of the principal persons of the nation, would not have dared to legitimate the usurpation of Pepin; he would

not have forbidden them, under pain of excommunication, to chuse a king of another race.

But did all the prelates really honour such princes as Pepin, Clovis, and Constantine? Some of them doubtless blushed inwardly at those odious beatifications; but most of them saw no crime in the criminal that enriched them. What cannot the fascination of interest operate on mankind?

CHAP. XVIII.

INTEREST MAKES SAINTS.

I SHALL take Charlemagne for an example. He was a great man; endowed with great virtues; but with none of those that make saints. His hands were embrued with the blood of the Saxons, whom he unjustly butchered; he robbed his nephews of their patrimony; he married four wives, and was accused of incest; his conduct was not that of a saint, but he increased the territory of the church, and the church made him a saint. It did the same by Hermenigildus, son of the Visigoth king Eurigildus. This young prince leagued with a prince of Suevia against his father, gave him battle, lost it near Cordova, and was killed by an officer

cer of Eurigildus; but as he believed in consubstantiality, the church sanctified him. A thousand villains have had the same fortune. St. Grill, bishop of Alexandria, assassinated the beautiful and sublime Hypatia, and was in like manner canonised.

Philip de Commines relates on this subject, that on entering the convent of the Carmelites, at Pavia, he was shewn the body of count Yvertu; that count who obtained the principality of Milan by the murder of his uncle Bernabo, and was the first that bore the title of duke. What! said Commines to the monk who attended him, have you canonised such a monster! He was one of our benefactors, replied the Carmelite; and, to increase their number, it is our custom to grant them the honours of sanctity: it is by us that fools and knaves become saints, and by them that we become rich.

How many successions have been violated by the monks? But they rob for the church, and the church makes them saints. The history of popery is nothing more than a vast collection of similar facts. When we open the legends we read the names of a thousand canonised scoundrels; but we look in vain for the name of Alfred the Great, who for a long time was the happiness of England; or of Henry IV. who would have been that of France; and for the names of those men of genius, who, by their discoveries in the arts and sciences, have been an honour to their age and their country.

The

Power of interest in the Catholic church.

The church, always greedy of riches, constantly disposes of dignities in heaven in favour of those who give it great riches upon earth. Interest peoples the celestial regions. What bounds can be set to its power? If God, as they say, has made all things for himself, *omnia propter semetipsum operatus est Dominus,* man, created after his image and resemblance, has done the same. It is always according to his own interest that he judges*. Is he often unhappy? It is because he wants discernment. Idleness, a momentary advantage,

* Our belief, according to some philosophers, is independent of our interest; these philosophers are right or wrong according to the idea they attach to the word *belief;* if they mean by it a clear idea of the matter believed, and that they can, like the geometricians, demonstrate its truth, it is certain that no error is believed, that none will stand investigation, that we form no clear idea of it, and that in this sense there are few believers. But if we take the word in the common acceptation, and mean by a believer an adorer of the bull Apis; if the man who, without having a clear idea of what he believes, believes by imitation, who, if I may be allowed the expression, believes he believes, and maintains the truth of his belief at the peril of his life; in this sense there are many believers. The Catholic church boasts continually of its martyrs; but I know not wherefore. Every religion has its own. "He that pretends to a revelation ought to die in the maintenance "of what he says: that is the only proof he can give of what he "asserts." It is not so with the philosopher; his propositions must be supported by facts and reasonings; whether he die or not in the maintenance of his doctrine is of little importance; his death would prove only that he was obstinately attached to his opinion; not that it was true.

advantage, and especially a shameful submission to received opinions, are so many rocks scattered in the course of our pursuit after happiness.

To avoid them we must think, and we will not take the trouble: men like better to believe than to examine. How often has our credulity blinded us in the pursuit of our true interest! Man has been defined a rational animal; I define him a credulous animal*: what can he not be made to believe? When a hypocrite pretends to virtue, he is reputed virtuous, and is in consequence more honoured than an honest man.

Do the clergy pretend to be without ambition? They are regarded as such, even at the time they declare themselves to be the first body of the state†.

Do the bishops and cardinals pretend to humility?

As for the rest, the belief of fanatics, always founded on an imaginary, but powerful interest in heavenly rewards, constantly imposes on the vulgar; and it is to these fanatics that we must attribute the establishment of almost all general opinions.

* The manners and actions of animals prove that they compare and judge. They are in this respect more or less rational, have more or less resemblance to man; but what comparison is there between their credulity and ours? None. It is principally in the extent of credulity that we differ; and it is this perhaps which most particularly distinguishes man from animals.

† If the apostles never assumed the rank of the first body of the state, if they never pretended to equal themselves to the Cæsars and proconsuls, the clergy must have a very high opinion of human stupidity to call themselves humble, and at the same time make such extravagant pretensions.

They

They are believed on their word; when by assuming the title of lordship, eminence, and excellence, the latter would even put themselves on a level with kings. *Cardinales regibus æquiparantur.*

The monk calls himself poor, and is reputed so, even at the time he possesses the greatest part of the revenue of a state; and this monk in consequence receives alms from an infinity of dupes.

To conclude, let no one be astonished at human imbecility: men, being in general badly educated, are what they ought to be; their extreme credulity rarely leaving them the free exercise of their reason, they in consequence form wrong judgments and are unhappy. What is to be done where men are indifferent to the matter on which they are to judge*, and consequently

* When an opinion appears to me indifferent, it is by the balance of my reason I weigh its advantages. But if that opinion excite in me hatred, love or fear, it is not my reason, but my passions, that judge of its truth or falsehood. Now the more vigorous my passions are, the less share will reason have in my judgments. To overcome the most gross prejudice, it is not enough to see its absurdity.

Have I demonstrated in the morning the non-existence of apparitions? If I am at night alone in a chamber or a wood, and phantoms or apparitions seem to rise out of the floor or the earth, terror seizes me: the most solid reasoning cannot dissipate my fear. To stifle in me the fear of spectres, it is not sufficient to prove their non-existence; I must have the reasons by which that prejudice is destroyed as habitually present with me, as constantly in my memory, as the prejudice itself. Now this is a work

without

without attention and discernment to judge properly; or where they have strong prejudices concerning that matter, and consequently it is the interest of the present moment that almost always directs their judgment?

A just judgment supposes an indifference for the matter judged of*, and an earnest desire to judge rightly. Now in the present state of societies few men are endowed with these two qualities of indifference and desire, or find themselves in the happy situation that produces them.

Too servilely attached to the interests of the present moment, we almost always sacrifice to it our future interests, and judge even against evidence itself. Perhaps M. de la Riviere has expected too much from this evidence; it is on its power he has founded the future happiness of nations, and this foundation is not so solid as he imagines.

of time, and in some cases of a very long time; till this time I shall tremble in the dark at the very name of a spectre and magician. This is a fact proved by experience.

* Why is a foreigner a better judge of the beauties of a new work than one of the same nation? Because indifference dictates the judgment of the former, and the other is directed by envy and prejudice, at least in the first moments. Not but that among the latter there are some who take a pride in forming a sound judgment; but their number is too small to give their judgment at first any weight with the public.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

INTEREST PERSUADES THE GREAT THAT THEY ARE OF A DIFFERENT SPECIES FROM OTHER MEN.

If we admit that there was a first man, we must all be of the same house, of a family equally ancient, and consequently all noble*.

Who would refuse the title of gentleman to him who by extracts taken from the registers of circumcisions and baptisms could prove a descent in a direct line from Abraham to himself? It is therefore nothing more than the preservation or the loss of extracts that distinguishes the nobleman from the plebeian.

But do the great really think themselves of a race superior to the mechanic, and the sovereign of a different species from a duke, count, &c.? Why not? I have seen men, no more sorcerers than myself, think and call themselves sorcerers, even on the scaffold. A thousand

* Nobles and heralds, by your leave,
Here lie the bones of Matthew Prior,
The son of Adam and of Eve,
Let Bourbon or Nassau go higher.

PRIOR. T.

sand instances prove this fact. There are people who think themselves born lucky; and when fortune abandons them a moment, are indigent. This opinion, says Mr. Hume, is in them the effect of the constant success of their first enterprizes; after this success they take their good fortune for an effect, and their star for the cause of that effect*. If such be human nature, can we wonder that the great, debauched by the daily homage rendered to their riches and dignities, think themselves of a peculiar race†.

Yet they acknowledge Adam to be the common father of all men; yes, but without being fully convinced of it: their actions, discourses, and looks, all give the lye to this acknowledgment; and they are all persuaded that they and the monarch have the same prerogative over the common people that the farmer has over his cattle.

I do not mean here to satirize the great‡, but mankind

* When two facts, says Mr. Hume, happen always together, there is supposed to be a necessary dependence between them. One of them is called the cause, and the other the effect.

† The antiquity of their house is in a peculiar manner dear to those who cannot attain the merit of their ancestors.

‡ If all men are the descendants of Adam, does it follow that they should be equally respected? No: there are in every society superiors that ought to have pre-eminence. But is it to great places or high birth that our respect is due? I answer for great places. They suppose at least some merit; and what the public has a real interest in honouring, is merit.

Reason why man is so subject to illusion.

kind in general. The tradesman has the same contempt for his porter, that the nobleman has for him.

To conclude, let no one be surprised to find man subject to so much illusion *: it would be more surprising to find him resist such errors as flatter his vanity.

He believes, and ever will believe, what he has an interest in believing: if he sometimes employ himself in the search of truth, it is because he sometimes imagines it to be his interest to find it.

* When prejudice commands, reason is silent. Prejudice makes men, in certain countries, respect the officer of quality, and despise the officer of fortune; consequently prefer birth to merit. There is no doubt that a state arrived at that degree of corruption is near its ruin.

CHAP. XX.

INTEREST MAKES MEN HONOUR VICE IN THEIR PROTECTOR.

When a man depends for his fortune and consideration on a person in power without merit, he becomes that person's panegyrist. The first of those men, hitherto honest, remains so no longer; he changes his manners, and, as it were, his being: he descends from the condition of a free citizen to that of a slave: his interest instantly becomes separate from that of the public. Solely occupied with the fortune of his protector, he thinks every method to increase it legitimate. Does his protector commit injustice, and oppress his fellow-citizens, and do they complain? They are to blame. Did not the priests of Jupiter make men adore in him the parricide by which they lived?

What does the protected require in the protector? Power, not merit. What in his turn does the protector require from the protected? Servility, devotion, and not virtue. It is by virtue of his devotion that the protected is raised to the first employments. If there have been instances where merit alone has raised a man

man, it has been in tempestuous times, when necessity has made him useful.

If in a civil war all important employments are given to men of talents, it is because the powerful of each party being strongly interested in the destruction of their adversaries, are forced to sacrifice their envy and other passions to their security. This interest makes them then see the merit of those whom they employ. But the danger past, and peace restored, the men in power become indifferent to vice or virtue, talents or stupidity: merit is then degraded, and truth despised; for what can it then do for mankind?

CHAP. XXI.

THE INTEREST OF THE POWERFUL IN GENERAL COMMANDS OPINIONS MORE IMPERIOUSLY THAN THE TRUTH.

MEN continually boast of the power of truth, and yet this power, so vaunted, is fruitless, if the interest of the prince do not make it prolific. How many truths are buried in such works as those of Gordon, Sydney, and Machiavel, and will not be recovered but by the efficacious efforts of a discerning and virtuous monarch. Such a prince, it is said, will arise sooner

or later. Be it so. Till that period those truths may be regarded as materials ready prepared for a building. It is certain that those materials will not be employed by a potentate but in such positions and circumstances as make it the interest of his glory to use them.

Opinion, we are told, is the queen of the world. There are certainly periods at which the general opinion commands sovereigns themselves: but what has this fact in common with the power of the truth? Does it shew that the general opinion is produced by it? No: experienee proves on the eontrary, that almost all questions in morality and politics are resolved by the strong and not by the rational; and that if opinion rules the world, it is at last the powerful that rule opinion.

Whoever dispenses honours, riches, and punishments, attaches to himself a great number of eitizens. These distributions debase their minds, and give him the command over them. Such are the means by whieh the sultans legitimate their most absurd pretensions, aecustom their subjects to honour the title of slaves, and despise that of free men.

What opinions are the most generally diffused? Without doubt religious opinions. Now it is not reason, nor truth, but violence, by which those are established (16). Mahomet would propagate his Koran; he armed, he flattered, he terrified the imagination. The people were by fear and hope influenced to receive

ceive his law; and the visions of the prophet soon became the opinion of half the universe.

But is not the progress of truth more rapid than that of error? Yes, when they are equally propagated by the powerful. Truth of itself is clear; every sound understanding can perceive it. Error, on the contrary, is always obscure, always wrapt up in the cloud of incomprehensibility, and there becomes the contempt of good sense. But what can good sense do against force? It is force, fraud, and chance, more than reason and truth, that have always presided at the formation of general opinions.

CHAP. XXII.

A SECRET INTEREST ALWAYS CONCEALED FROM THE PARLIAMENTS THE CONFORMITY OF THE MORALITY OF THE JESUITS WITH POPERY.

THE parliaments have at the same time condemned the morality of the Jesuits and respected that of Popery *. The conformity of those two moralities, is, however,

* The natural pox, said a great politician, has made vast ravages among the European nations; but the moral pox (popery) has made still a greater.

however, evident. The protection granted to the Jesuits by the pope, and the greatest part of the Catholic bishops (17), renders this conformity striking. We know that the Popish church always approved, in the works of those religious, maxims that are as favourable to Rome, as they are unfavourable to every other government; yet the clergy in this respect were their accomplices. The morality of the Jesuits is however alone condemned. The parliaments are silent with regard to that of the church. Why? Because they fear to contend with a criminal too strong for them.

They have a confused perception that their influence is not equal to that enterprize; that it was scarcely able to counterpoise the weight of the Jesuits. Their interest therefore advises them not to attempt more, and directs them to honour in the guilty the crime which they cannot punish.

CHAP. XXIII.

INTEREST MAKES MEN DAILY CONTRADICT THIS MAXIM; DO NOT TO OTHERS WHAT THOU WOULDST NOT THEY SHOULD DO UNTO THEE.

THE Catholic priest, persecuted by the Calvinist or the Mussulman, denounces persecution to be an infrac tion

tion of the law of nature; but when this priest becomes a persecutor, persecution appears to him legitimate: it is in him the effect of a holy zeal, and a love of his neighbour. Thus the same action becomes either just or unjust according as the priest is executioner or malefactor.

If we read the history of the different sects among the Christians, we find that as long as they were weak they employed no other arms in their theological disputes than those of argument (18) and entreaty. But when those sects became strong, from the persecuted, as I have already said, they became the persecutors. Calvin burned Servetus. The Jesuit persecutes the Jansenist, and the Jansenist would burn the Deist. Into what a labyrinth of errors and contradictions does interest lead us! It obscures in us even self-evident truths.

What in fact does the theatre of this world present to us? Nothing but the various and perpetual movements of interest (19). The more we meditate on this principle, the more we perceive its extent and fecundity. It is an inexhaustible mine of subtle and powerful ideas.

CHAP. XXIV.

INTEREST CONCEALS FROM THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE PRIEST HIMSELF, WHO IS AN HONEST MAN, THE EVILS PRODUCED BY POPERY.

THE most religious countries are the most uncultivated. It is in the ecclesiastical dominions that the greatest depopulation appears: for those countries are of all others the worst governed. In the catholic cantons of Switzerland want and stupidity reign; in the protestant cantons, plenty and industry: popery therefore is destructive to empires. It is above all fatal to those nations, who, powerful by their commerce, have an interest in improving their colonies*, encouraging industry, and advancing the arts.

But among the several nations what is it that renders the papal idol so respectable? Custom. What is it among the same nations that forbids men to think? Idleness; which reigns over men of every condition.

It is from idleness that princes see all things with the eyes of others; and from idleness that, in certain cases,

* Rising colonies become populous by toleration, and for that reason the Christian religion should be called back to those principles on which it was founded by Jesus.

cases, nations and ministers charge the pope with thinking for them. What follows? That the pontiff profits by this privilege to extend and confirm his authority, which princes might limit were they firmly resolved to do it. Without such resolution it is not to be imagined that an intolerant church will break the chains with which she fetters the people.

Intolerance is a mine under the throne that is always charged, and which ecclesiastical discontent is always ready to set on fire. What can counteract this mine? Philosophy and virtue: for which reason the church constantly decries the information of the one, and the humanity of the other; and always draws philosophy and virtue in hideous colours*. The object of the clergy has been to discredit them, and their means have been by calumny. Men in general like better to believe than examine; and the clergy in consequence always find in the aversion of men for thinking the firmest support of the papal power. What other cause could blind the eyes of the French magistrates to the danger of popery? If in the affair of the Jesuits

* If the hatred that exhales in vagué accusations proves the innocence of the accused, nothing does philosophy more honour than sacerdotal hatred. The clergy have never cited facts against it; they did not accuse the philosophers of the assassination of Henry IV. of the sedition of Madrid, or of the conspiracy of St. Domingo. It was a monk, and not a philosopher, who there encouraged the blacks to massacre the whites.

they

they shewed the most anxious tenderness for their prince, if they then foresaw the excess to which fanaticism might run, they did not however see, that of all religions popery is the most proper to light it up.

The love of the magistrates for the prince is not to be doubted; but it is to be doubted whether that love in them be well informed. Their eyes have been a long time shut against the light; if they should one day open them, they will see that it is toleration alone which can secure the life of the monarchs who protect them. They have seen fanaticism attack a prince who every day gives proofs of his humanity by the numerous acts of goodness which he bestows on those that approach him.

I am a stranger, and know not this prince; he is, they say, beloved. Such however is the effect of superstition in the heart of a devout Frenchman, that his love for a monk is still superior to that for his king.

Can we not, on so important a subject, awaken the attention of the magistrates, and open their eyes to the dangers to which the intolerance of popery will always expose a sovereign?

CHAP. XXV.

EVERY INTOLERANT RELIGION IS ESSENTIALLY REGICIDAL.

ALMOST every religion is intolerant, and in every religion of this kind intolerance furnishes a pretext for persecution and murder; even the throne itself affords no shelter against sacerdotal cruelty. Intolerance being once admitted, the priest can equally persecute the enemy of God on the throne* and in the cottage.

* If we believe the Jesuit Santarel, the pope has a right to punish kings. In a treatise on heresy, schism, apostacy, and the papal power, printed at Rome, with the permission of the superiors, by the executor, Barteline Lanory, in 1626 that Jesuit says,—If the pope have over princes a directing power, he has also a corrective power. The sovereign pontiff can therefore punish heretic princes by temporal pains : he can not only excommunicate them, but also strip them of their kingdoms, and absolve their subjects from their oath of fidelity. He can appoint directors for princes incapable of governing ; and this he may do without any council, because the tribunal of the pope and of Jesus Christ is one and the same. The pope, he adds, in another part of this work, can depose kings, either on account of their being incapable of governing, or because they are too weak defenders of the church. He may therefore on the above accounts, and for the correction and examples of kings, punish the defaulters with death.

Intolerance

The ambition of the clergy is dangerous to the public welfare.

Intolerance is the mother of regicide. It was on its intolerance, that the church founded the edifice of its grandeur ; all its members concur in its construction ; all of them think they shall be so much more respectable and happy (20) as the body to which they belong shall be more powerful. Priests of all ages have therefore been solely employed in increasing the ecclesiastical power (21). Every where the clergy have been ambitious, and every where they must be so.

But does the ambition of that body necessarily produce public calamity ? Yes ; if that body cannot gratify its ambition but by actions contrary to the public welfare. It was of little signification that in Greece Lycurgus, Leonidas, and Timoleon, that at Rome Brutus, Emilius, and Regulus, were ambitious. That passion could not display itself in them but by services rendered to their country. It is not so with the clergy ; they would have a supreme authority, which they cannot obtain but by depriving the legal possessors of it. They must therefore make a perpetual secret war on the temporal power, and for that purpose weaken the authority of princes and magistates, and let loose intolerance : by this they can shake thrones, by this they can degrade the people*, render them at

* The ignorance of the people is frequently fatal to the prince. Among such a people every sovereign, reprobated by his clergy, is thought to be justly reprobated. It is not therefore without cause that the church has made *poorness of spirit* one of

once

once poor*, idle, and stupid. All the steps by which the clergy mount to supreme power are therefore so many public calamities. It is popery that will one day destroy in France the laws and the parliaments ; a destruction that always foretels the corruption of national manners, and the ruin of an empire.

In vain is the ambition of the clergy denied. The study of man will prove it to those who apply themselves to it, and the study of history to those who read that of the church. From the moment that it instituted a temporal chief, that chief proposed the humiliation of kings ; he would at his pleasure dispose of their lives and their crowns. Such was his design. To effect it, the princes themselves must concur in their degradation ; and for that purpose the priest must insinuate himself into their confidence, become their counsellor, and share their authority : and in this priests have succeeded. This however was not all ; they found it necessary to establish by de-

the first Christian virtues. What part of the works of M. Rousseau do the religious most approve ? Those in which he is the panegyrist of ignorance.

* Why does the church in its institutions never consult the public welfare ? Why celebrate feasts and Sundays sometimes in a rainy harvest season ? Two or three days are frequently sufficient to get in a third or fourth of the grain, and so far prevent a scarcity or famine. This the clergy know ; but what has the public good to do with the schemes of their ambition ? The interest of the ecclesiastics and that of the nation have nothing in common.

grees

grees the opinion of the pre-eminence of the spiritual power over that of the temporal. For this purpose the popes heaped ecclesiastical honours on all who, like Bellarmine, made sovereigns the subjects to the pope, and declared a doubt on that point to be a heresy.

This opinion once established, the church could hurl its anathemas, preach up crusades against monarchs rebellious to its orders*, and blow up discord every where; it could in the name of the God of peace massacre a part of mankind †. What it could do, it did.

Its power soon equalled that of the ancient Celtic priests, who, under the name of Druids, ruled the Britons, Gauls, and Scandinavians, excommunicated princes, and sacrificed them to their interest or caprice.

But to dispose of the lives of princes it was necessary to subdue the minds of the people. By what art did the priests effect this?

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* The bull *in cœna domini* declares in this respect all the pretensions of the church, and the acceptation of that bull all the stupidity of certain nations.

† In a work on intolerance, M. de Malveaux says, that the popish, like the Mahometan religion, cannot maintain itself but by punishments and murder. With what horror should this consideration inspire us against popery.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVI.

OF THE MEANS EMPLOYED BY THE CHURCH TO BRING NATIONS UNDER ITS SUBJECTION.

These means are simple. To be independent of the prince, the clergy must derive their power from God: they said it, and the people believed it.

To be obeyed in preference to kings, they must be considered as inspired by the Divinity: they said it, and the people believed it.

To bring human reason under their subjection, God must be supposed to speak by their mouths: they said it, and the people believed it.

Then adds the church, by declaring myself infallible, I am so; and by declaring myself the avenger of God, I become such. Therefore in this august employ, my enemy is the enemy of the Most High, and is, by an infallible church, declared a heretic.

Therefore, whether he be a prince or not, whatever title the offender may bear, the church has a right to imprison, torture, and burn him*. What is a king

* If the priests in general be cruel, it is because, being formerly before

before the Eternal ? All men in his eyes, and in the eyes of the church, are equal.

Now when in consequence of these principles the church, by virtue of its infallibility, had assumed and exercised the power of persecuting, it became formidable to all people, all bowed down before it, and fell at the feet of the priests. Every man in short, (whatever his rank), becoming thus subject to the clergy, acknowledged in them a power superior to that of magistrates and monarchs.

Such were the means by which the priests subdued the people, and made princes tremble ; so that wherever the church has erected a tribunal of inquisition, its throne is placed above that of the sovereign.

But in those countries where the church cannot arm itself with the inquisitorial power, how does it triumph over the power of the prince ? By persuading him, as at Vienna and in France, that he reigns by religion ; that its ministers, so often the destroyers of kings, are their supporters, and in short, that his throne is founded on the altar.

But we know that in China, in India, and in all the East, thrones rest secure by their own strength : and we know that in the West, it has been the priests who have overthrown them ; that religion, oftener than the ambition of the great, has created regicides : that

sacrificers and butchers, they still retain the spirit of their original empoyment.

in

in the present state of Europe, monarchs have nothing to fear but fanaticism. Can those monarchs still doubt the audacity of a body that has so often declared them to be under its jurisdiction?

This haughty pretension would doubtless have at length opened the eyes of princes, if the church, according to times and circumstances, had not on this point appeared successively to change its opinion.

CHAP. XXVII.

OF THE TIME WHEN THE CHURCH WILL LAY ASIDE ITS PRETENSIONS.

When the spirit of the age is but little favourable to the enterprizes of the priesthood; when the lights of philosophy have illumined all ranks of men; when the military have more discernment, and are more attached to the prince than to the clergy; when the sovereign himself, by being more intelligent, becomes more respectable to the church, it will then lay aside its ferocity, moderate its zeal, and publicly avow the independence of the prince. But will this avowal be sincere? Will it be the effect of necessity or prudence, or the real persuasion of the clergy? A proof that the

church does not by its silence abandon its pretensions, is that it always teaches the same doctrine at Rome. The clergy affect without doubt the greatest respect for royalty ; they would have it honoured even in tyrants (22). But its maxims in this respect prove less its attachment to sovereigns, than an indifference and contempt for the happiness of men and of nations.

What is the tyranny of bad kings to the church, provided it can partake of their power ? The angel of darkness carried the son of man to the top of a mountain, and said to him, You here see all the kingdoms of the earth, worship me and I will make you master of them all. The church says in like manner to the prince, Be my slave, the executioner of my barbarities, worship me, inspire the people with a fear of the priest, and plunge them in ignorance and stupidity, and I will give thee an unlimited empire over thy subjects ; then shalt thou be a tyrant. What a monstrous treaty between despotism and the sacerdotal power!

The church is said to teach respect of princes and magistrates: but does it honour them, when in Spain it appoints them to be the executioners of its inquisition, and in France its jailors*, and orders them to imprison all who do not think as they do ? It is to degrade princes to charge them with such employments.

* In Catholic countries they inquire carefully whether a peasant be a Calvinist or go to mass ; but never if he have any bacon in his pot.

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It is to hate the people to command them to submit to the most inhuman tyrants. Does the church moreover set them the example? does it humble itself before those princes whom it calls heretics?

A secret enemy to the temporal power, the priesthood, according to the time and the character of kings, either flatters or insults them. The moment a sovereign ceases to be their slave, an anathema is suspended over his head: if the monarch be weak, the anathema is hurled, he is the sport of his clergy; but if he be sagacious and resolute, his clergy will respect him.

The pope refused the demands of Valdemar, king of Denmark, and that prince sent him the following message: "We owe our life to God, our kingdom "to our people, our riches to our forefathers, and our "faith to your predecessors, which, if you do not grant "our request, we hereby send you back*." Such should be the style of every prudent prince to the court of Rome: he that can brave it has nothing to fear from it.

Priests, from the effeminacy of their education, are pusillanimous; they have the beard of a man, and the heart of a woman. They are imperious toward those that fear them, and cowardly toward those that resist them. Henry VIII. was a proof of this.

* Vitam habemus a Deo, regnum ab incolis, divitias a parentibus, fidem a tuis predecessoribus, quam, si nobis non faves, remittimus per presentes.

An unsuccessful conspiracy under such a king is the signal for the total destruction of the priests; this they know, and terror in this case holds their arm. Against whom do they raise it? Princes either weak or good. Had Henry IV. paid less respect to the sacerdotal power he would not have been its victim. He that dreads the clergy renders them dreadful. But if the power of the church depends on opinion, when that opinion is weakened, is not its power diminished? I answer, it remains entire so long as it is not totally annihilated. To recover its credit, it is sufficient that a priest gain the confidence of the prince; this confidence acquired, he will banish all intelligent men from the presence of the monarch. Such men are the invisible props of a throne and a magistracy against the sacerdotal power. Once banished the empire, the people, directed by the priests, will again fall into their ancient stupidity, and monarchs into their ancient slavery.

Perhaps the present temper of mankind is but little favourable to the clergy; but a body that is immortal ought never to despair of its credit. So long as it subsists it has lost nothing. To recover its former power, nothing more is necessary than to watch the opportunity, seize it, and constantly pursue its end. The rest is the work of time.

A body that, like the clergy, enjoys immense riches, may patiently wait the opportunity. If it cannot preach up crusades against sovereigns and attack them

them openly, it has still left the resource of fanaticism against every prince that has not sufficient resolution to establish the law of toleration*.

CHAP. XXVIII.

OF THE TIME WHEN THE CHURCH WILL RENEW ITS PRETENSIONS.

WHEN a weak and superstitious prince possesses the throne of a great empire; when the church there erects a tribunal of inquisition, and enriched with the spoils of heretics, becomes every day more wealthy and powerful; and by horrible and multiplied cruelties terrifies the minds of men, extinguishes the light of science, and brings back the darkness of stupidity: the church will then have a sovereign command, and renew its pretensions. The reign of the monarch will be the age of sacerdotal grandeur; and if the same causes necessarily produce the same effects, the people,

* Wherever several religions and several sects are tolerated, they become insensibly habituated to each other; their zeal loses every day something of its acrimony. Where a full toleration is established there are few fanatics.

become slaves to the church, will acknowledge it to be possessed of a power superior to that of the sovereign. The prince then humbled, and deprived of the aid of his subjects, will be nothing more to his clergy than a private citizen, exposed to the same contempt, the same indignation, and the same chastisement as the meanest of his subjects. Whether this conduct be criminal or not, superstition justifies it. The avowed infallibility of a body legitimates all its crimes.

CHAP. XXIX.

THE PRETENSIONS OF THE CHURCH PROVED BY RIGHT.

THE governments of Germany and France have released the subjects from the butcheries of an inquisition. But by what right, says the church, do those governments set bounds to my power? Was it with my consent they banished my inquisitors? Have I not incessantly recalled them into those empires*? Do

* Among the papers of the Jesuits that were seized, the attorney general of the parliament of Aix found under the name of a council of conscience the project of an inquisition. What the Jesuits not

not the clergy of Spain and Portugal regard the inquisition as salutary? Have the prelates of France and Germany charged that tribunal with being impious and prejudicial? Have they separated themselves from the communion of those cruel priests *, because they had burned their brethren. In short, is there a Catholic country where, at least by their silence, the bishops have not approved the inquisition? Now what is the church? An assembly of ecclesiastics. Does the church declare itself the avenger of God? That

were not able to effect in the reign of Lewis XIV. they apparently hoped to execute under a more favourable reign.

* The bishops should take example by St. Martin. That prelate learned that Maximilian had executed the heretic Priscilian; that a Spanish bishop named Ithacius, a man given up to debauchery, atrocious, intriguing, and cruel, had obtained that sentence by surprise: he went to Maximilian, represented to him that religion ought not to shed human blood, and reproached him bitterly with that crime.

While St. Martin remained at Treves the heretics were undisturbed. After his departure the bishops, assisted by Ithacius, again solicited Maximilian, and engaged him to retract the promise he made St. Martin: they even accused that saint of heresy, and proscribed the sectaries. St. Martin being informed of it, would no longer communicate with these persecutors. Some time after he relaxed, and in hopes of saving the rest of the Priscilians, and to suspend the religious persecutions, he consented to assist with these bishops at the ordination of the bishop of Treves: but soon repented of it. He attributed to this weakness the loss of the gift of miracles, and declared his condescension to be a crime; which he expiated by a long penance.

right of vengeance is to persecute men. The same infallibility that has given the church that right, has authorised the church to execute it, as well over kings, as over the meanest of their subjects (23).

But it may be said, ought the majesty of princes to humble itself before the pride of the priests? Ought it to submit to the punishments inflicted by the sacerdotal power? Why not, the church will reply? What is their pretended majesty? An absolute nullity before the Eternal and his ministers. Can the vain title of king annihilate the rights of the clergy? They cannot lose their rights. Whether prince or subject be guilty of heresy, the same crime demands the same punishment. Besides if the conduct of a prince be a law to the people; if his example can authorize their impiety, it is the blood of kings especially that the interest of God and the priest requires. The church made it flow in the time of Henry III. and Henry IV. and the church is always the same. The doctrine of Bellarmin is the doctrine of Rome and of its seminaries. "The first Christians, says that doctor, had a "right to kill Nero, and all the princes, their per- "secutors. If they suffered without complaining, it "was from a want of confidence, and not a want "of right." Samuel had no right which the Catholic church, that spouse of God (24), does not still possess. Now Agag was a king: Samuel commanded Saul to murder that king; Saul hesitated; he was proscribed, and his scepter given to another. Let Christians, instructed by this example know, that the

the moment God commands the punishment of a king by the mouth of a priest, it is the Christian's part to obey. To hesitate is a crime.

CHAP. XXX.

THE PRETENSIONS OF THE CHURCH PROVED BY FACTS.

THE same rights, says the church, that my infallibility has given me over kings, an immemorial possession has confirmed to me. Princes have ever been my slaves, and I have always shed human blood. In vain do the impious cite against me this passage; "Render "to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's." If Cæsar be a heretic, what should the church render to him? Death*.

Is it for Catholics to read and quote the scriptures? Do they pretend, like Protestants and Quakers, to seek their sense, and be their interpreters? The letter killeth, but the spirit maketh alive.

Let Catholics, by the example of the saints, humbly

* It was thus in the time of Henry III. and Henry IV. of Clement and Ravaillac, that the Sorbonnists interpreted this passage.

adore

adore the decisions of the church, and acknowledge its power over the temporalities of kings. That Thomas of Canterbury, that intriguing, ungrateful, audacious priest, as they call him, was a most lively defender of the sacerdotal rights, and his zeal has placed him in the rank of saints. Let the vile laity, those insects of darkness, humble their reason before the incomprehensible scriptures, and attend their interpretation in silence: it is enough for them to know that all authority is from God, revealed to his vicar, and that there is no one independent of the pope. The catholic princes have in vain endeavoured to free themselves from that holy yoke; they have not themselves been yet able to determine the precise bounds of the two authorities*. How can they reproach the church, when they acknowledge its infallibility? It is therefore void of ambition. The most authentic testimonies of its own history cannot depose against it. In short, the most clear demonstrations are insufficient to prove it guilty of any crimes.

* Is it impossible to fix these bounds? No. If the priests, as they say, pretended to nothing but spiritual authority, and property of that sort, they should be allowed to exercise no authority but in the land of spirits. As to property, they should have such only as is the most aërial or spiritual; consequently all, from the pinnacle of the Cordeliers to the empyrean, should be theirs; but all the rest should belong to kings and republics.

Europe

Europe now denies the infallibility of the church; but there was no doubt made of it when the clergy transferred to the Spaniards the crown of Montezuma, when they armed the West against the East, when they ordered their saints to preach up crusades, and in short, disposed of the crowns of Asia at their pleasure. What the church could do in Asia, it can do in Europe also.

What moreover are the rights claimed by the clergy? Those that have been enjoyed by priests of all religions. In the time of paganism, were not the most magnificent gifts carried in Sweden to the famous temple of Upsal? The most sumptuous offerings, says M. Mallet, were, in times of public or private calamities made to the Druids. Now at the time the catholic priests succeeded to the wealth and power of those Druids, they had, like them, a part in all the revolutions of Sweden. How many seditions were excited by the archbishops of Upsal! How many changes made by them in the form of government! The throne itself was not then a protection against the power of those formidable prelates. If they demanded the blood of princes, the people hastened to shed it. Such were in Sweden the rights of the church.

In Germany they obliged the emperors, with bare heads and feet, to come before the pope and acknowledge in him the supreme authority.

In France they commanded the kings, stripped of their habits by the ministers of religion, to be bound

to

to the altars, and there scourged with rods, that they might expiate the crimes of which the church accused them.

In Portugal the inquisition disinterred the body of Don John IV *, to absolve him from an excommunication which he had not incurred.

At the time of the difference between Paul V. and the regency of Venice, the church anathematised the learned man whose pen had revenged the public; it did more, it assassinated father Paul, and no one contested the right †. Europe saw the action, and held a respectful silence concerning it.

When Rome in like manner anathematised the lord of Milan ‡; when it declared Malatesta, Ordolaphe, and Manfredi heretics, and published crusades against them §, the princes of Europe were silent, and their

* The crime of Don John was his forbidding the inquisitors to appropriate the goods of their victims; though that prohibition was not contrary even to the new bull that the Dominicans, unknown to that prince, had obtained of the pope.

† Father Paul, on receiving a stab with a poignard while he was saying mass, pronounced as he fell those celebrated words, *agnosco stylum Romanum.*

‡ The only crime of which the pope accused Visconti was, that in quality of vassal of the empire he had shewn too much zeal in the cause of the emperor Lewis of Bavaria: for this zeal he was declared a heretic.

§ The crime of Malatesta was the surprising of Rimini; that of Ordolaphe and Manfredi, the making themselves masters of

silence

silence was a tacit acknowledgment of the right now claimed by the church; a right exercised by it in all times, and founded on the unshakable base of infallibility.

Now what answer can be given to this croud of examples and reasonings on which the clergy found their pretensions? The church once acknowledged infallible, and the sole interpreter of the scriptures (25), every right it pretends to is a right established; there can be none of its decisions that is not true: to doubt them is impiety. If it declare a king to be a heretic, he becomes such: if it condemn him to punishment, he must suffer it. However barbarous or intolerant a body may be, if we allow it to be infallible, we have no right to judge its actions: to deny its justice is to deny the immediate and evident consequence of the principle we admit. I shall not pursue this matter further, but content myself with observing, that if it be true, as I have said above, that every man, or at least every body of men, are ambitious, then,

Faenza, on which the pope had formed pretensions. All the popes were then usurpers, and all their enemies were declared heretics. These popes however confessed, but did not restore. Their successors enjoy without scruple what the others unlawfully obtained. This enjoyment might be regarded as a mystery of iniquity; I would rather regard it as a mystery of theology.

Conclusions from the preceding observations.

Their ambition is either virtuous or vicious, according to the means which they employ to gratify it.

The means employed by the church are always destructive of the happiness of a nation.

Its grandeur, founded on intolerance, must impoverish a nation, degrade the magistrates, and endanger the life of the sovereign; in short, the interest of the sacerdotal power never can coincide with that of the public.

From these several facts we must conclude that religion, (not that gentle and tolerant religion established by Jesus), but that of the priests, by virtue of which they declare themselves the avengers of the Divinity, and pretend to the right of persecuting and burning their brethren, is a religion of discord * and of blood; a regicidal religion, and on which an ambitious clergy may always establish those horrid rights of which they have so frequently made use.

But what can kings do against the ambition of the church? Deny it, like certain sects of Christians,

1. The qualification of infallibility;
2. The exclusive right of interpreting the scriptures;
3. The title of the avenger of the Divinity.

* If religion be sometimes a pretence for troubles and civil wars, the true cause we are told is, the ambition and avarice of princes; but without the aid of an intolerant religion, their ambition would never arm a hundred thousand men.

CHAP. XXXI.

OF THE MEANS OF RESTRAINING ECCLESIASTICAL AMBITION.

When it is left to God to take his own vengeance, and to punish heretics; and the inhabitants of the earth do not arrogate to themselves the right of judging offences committed against heaven (26); in short, when the precept of toleration becomes a precept of public instruction, the priesthood having no longer any pretence for persecuting mankind, fomenting the people to rebel, and usurping the temporal power, their ambition will be extinct. Then, divested of their ferocity, they will no longer curse their sovereigns, nor arm a Ravaillac, nor open the gates of heaven to regicides. If faith be a gift of heaven, they who have it not, deserve to be pitied, not punished. It is the excess of inhumanity to persecute an unfortunate person. By what fatality is it then practised in matters of religion?

Toleration established, heaven would no longer be the reward of murder and the most atrocious attempts.

Besides, whether a prince be barbarous or beneficent, a Busiris or a Trajan, it is always his interest to establish toleration. It is the slaves of the church only that

that it permits to be tyrants. Now Busiris would not be a slave.

With regard to a prince that is virtuous and jealous of the happiness of his subjects, what will be his principal care? That of weakening the power of the priesthood. It is the clergy that will always most strongly oppose the execution of his benevolent projects. The spiritual power is always either the open or secret enemy * of the temporal. The church is tyger; when chained by the law of toleration, it is gentle; when the chain is broken it resumes its former fury. By what the church has formerly done, princes may judge what it would again do if it were possessed of its former power. The past should inform them of the future.

The magistrate who flatters himself with making the the spiritual and temporal powers concur in the same object, that is, the public good, deceives himself: their interests are too opposite. It is with these two powers, sometimes united to devour the same people, as with two neighbouring and jealous nations, which

* When a sovereign grants favour and consideration to bigots, he furnishes his enemy with arms. His foreign enemies are the neighbouring princes; his domestic are the theologians. Should he increase their power? The multiplicity of religions in a kingdom gives solidity to the throne. Sectaries cannot be maintained but by those of other sects. In morality, as in physics, it is the equilibrium of opposite forces that produces rest.

leagued

which leagued against a third, attack and subdue it, that they may part the spoil between them.

No empire can be wisely governed by two supreme and independent powers. It is from one alone, either divided into several, or united in the hands of a monarch, that all law ought to proceed.

Toleration subjects the priest to the prince; intolerance the prince to the priest. It infers two rival powers in an empire.

Perhaps the ancients, in the partition they made of the universe between Oromazes and Arimanes, and in the recital of their perpetual combats, meant nothing more than the perpetual war between the sacerdotal and temporal powers. The reign of Oromazes was that of light and virtue: such should be the reign of the laws. The reign of Arimanes was that of darkness and wickedness; and such must be that of the priesthood and superstition.

Who are the disciples of Oromazes? The philosophers, at present so persecuted in France by the monks, the ministers of Arimanes. Of what crimes are they accused? None. They have, as far as was in their power, enlightened mankind; freed them from the infamous yoke of superstition; and it is perhaps to their writings that princes and magistrates owe, in part, the preservation of their authority.

The ignorance of the people, the mother of a stupid devotion (27,) is a poison, that sublimed by religious chemists, spreads round the throne the mortal exhala-

tions of superstition. The learning of the philosophers, on the contrary, is a pure and sacred fire, that drives far from kings the pestilential vapours of fanaticism.

The prince who subjects himself and his people to the sacerdotal empire, drives from him his virtuous subjects: he reigns, but it is over the superstitious only; over a people whose minds are totally degraded; in short, over slaves to the priest. These slaves are men dead to their country; they serve it not, either by their talents, or their courage. A country where there is an inquisition cannot be the country of an honest citizen (28). Unhappy is the nation where the monk persecutes with impunity all who despise his legends, and believe not in witchcraft and fairies; where he drags to punishment the virtuous man, *who does good, offends no one, and speaks the truth.* Under the reign of fanaticism, says Mr. Hume, in the life of Mary of England, the most persecuted were the most honest and discerning. From the moment bigotry takes in hand the reins of an empire, virtue and talents are banished: then the minds of men fall into a dejection, and the only one that is perhaps incurable.

However critical the situation of a people may be, one great man is sometimes alone sufficient to change the face of affairs. The war broke out between France and England; France had at first the advantage: Mr. Pitt was raised to the ministry; the English nation resumed its spirit, and the naval officers their intrepidity. The punishment of an admiral produced this change.

 The

The minister communicated the activity of his genius to the commanders of his enterprizes: the avidity of the soldier and the sailor, awakened by the allurements of gain and plunder, re-animated their courage; and nothing was less similar than the English at the beginning and the end of the war.

Mr. Pitt, it will be said, ruled over free men: it is doubtless easy to inspire the spirit of life into such a people. In every other country what use can be made of the powerful resource of patriotic love? If in the East a citizen should make the interest of his nation his own; if he should participate the glory, the shame and misfortune of his country, and it should sink under a load of calamities, can such a man ever pretend to name the authors of those evils? If he name them he is lost. A good citizen, under certain governments, must therefore be punished as such, or cease to be such. Is it so in France? I know not. But this I know, that the only minister who in the last war could have given some energy to the nation was the duke de Choiseul. His birth, his courage, the elevation of his character, the vivacity of his conceptions, would doubtless have re-animated the French, if they had been capable of re-animation; but bigotry then commanded too imperiously over the great (29). Such was its power over them, that at the time France was beaten on every side, and saw her colonies ravished from her, nothing was regarded at Paris but

the affair of the Jesuits *; no efforts were made but for them.

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* When the affair of the Jesuits was in agitation, if news came to Paris of the loss of a battle, it was scarcely regarded for a day; the next day they talked of the expulsion of the holy fathers. Those fathers, to divert the public from investigating their constitutions, exclaimed incessantly against the Encyclopedists. They attributed the bad success of the French arms to the progress of philosophy; it is that, they said, debauches the minds of the generals and soldiers: the devout were convinced it was so. A thousand jackdaws repeated the same words: and yet it was the very philosophic people of England, and the still more philosophic king of Prussia, who beat those French generals that no one suspected of philosophy.

On the other hand, the lovers of ancient music maintained that the misfortunes of France were owing to the taste for buffoons, and Italian music; for that music, according to them, had entirely corrupted the French manners. I was then at Paris. It is not to be imagined how ridiculous such notions, maintained by what the French call good company, made them appear to foreigners.

Good sense was treated, by almost all the great ladies, as impiety: they talked of nothing but the reverend father Berthier; and measured the merit of a man only by the size of his missal.

In every funeral oration they harangued on nothing but the piety of the deceased; and his panegyric was reduced to this *That the great man so extolled was an ideot, whom the monks had always led by the nose.* There was no exhortation or sermon that did not end with some satiric invective against the philosophers and Encyclopedists. The preacher, toward the end of his discourse, advanced to the edge of his pulpit, like a castrato to the

Such

Instruction is capable of improving a superstitious nation.

Such was the spirit that reigned at Constantinople when besieged by Mahomet the Second; the ministers held councils at the very time that sultan took possession of the suburbs. Bigotry contracts the spirit of the people; toleration extends it. That alone can divest the French of their devout ferocity.

However superstitious or fanatic a nation may be, its character will be always susceptible of divers forms which it will receive from its laws, its government, and especially its public education. Instruction can do all things; and if I have in the preceding sections scrupulously detailed the evils produced by an ignorance in favour of which many people now declare themselves, it was that I might more clearly shew all the importance of education.

What are the means to improve it to the greatest degree?

Perhaps there are ages, when content to sketch out a grand plan, we ought not to flatter ourselves with seeing it executed.

It is with the discussion of this question that I shall conclude this work.

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edge of the stage, the one to make his epigrammatic point, and the other his finishing note. If the preacher had forgotten, the audience would have called for his epigram, as they do on harlequin for his antic bow.

NOTES ON SECTION IX.

NOTES.

1. (Page 304.) IGNORANCE rebels against contradiction. The man of discernment can suffer it, because, being a scrupulous examiner of himself, he frequently detects his own errors. The ignorant are not sensible of the want of instruction : they think they know all things. Who does not examine himself thinks he is infallible, as do most men, especially the French *petit maitre*. I have always observed him astonished at his want of success among foreigners. He should know, that if it be necessary in the ports of the Levant to speak the language of the place, it is also necessary, if he would make himself understood, to speak the language of good sense, and that a petit maitre always appears ridiculous, when in place of the language of reason he substitutes the modish jargon of his country.

2. (p. 305.) General truths enlighten the public without personally offending the man in place; why then does he not excite writers to the search after truths of this sort? Because they sometimes oppose his projects.

3. (p. 312.) It is not the novelty of a theological opinion that offends, but the violence employed to force its reception. This violence has sometimes produced strong commotions in empires. A noble and elevated soul bears with impatience the slavish yoke of the priest ; and the persecuted always avenge themselves of the persecutor. Man, says Machiavel, has a right to think all things, speak all things, write all things, but not to impose his opinions. Let the theologian persuade or convince me, but let him not pretend to force my belief.

4. (ibid.) The only intolerable religion is an intolerant religion. When

NOTES ON SECTION IX.

When such a religion becomes the most powerful in an empire, it lights up the torch of war, and plunges the people into numberless troubles and calamities.

5. (p. 313.) When princes are indifferent to theological disputes, the haughty theologians, after having furiously railed at each other, are tired of writing without being read: the contempt of the public silences them.

6. (p. 316.) A prudent legislator always employed some celebrated writer to publish such new laws as he would establish. After those laws have been some time exposed to the judgment of the public under the name of that author, and have been approved, they are then received without opposition.

7. (ibid.) When a minister makes a law, or a philosopher discovers a truth, till the utility of that law and that truth be established, they are both exposed to the rage of envy and bigotry. Their situation is yet very different: the minister, armed with power, is exposed to invective only; but the philosopher, destitute of power, is subject to persecution also.

8. (p. 317.) We hear men every day extol the excellency of certain foreign establishments, but these establishments, they add, are not compatible with such a form of government. If this be true in some particular cases, it is false in most. Is the criminal process of the English the most proper to protect innocence? Why then do not the French, Germans, and Italians adopt it?

9. (p. 318.) Princes daily change the laws of commerce; such as regulate the collection of taxes and customs; they can therefore equally change every law contrary to the public good. Did Trajan think a republican government preferable to monarchy? He offered to change that form of government; he offered liberty to the Romans, and would have given it them, if they would have accepted it. Such an action doubtless deserves the highest commendation; it has filled the world with admiration. But is it so supernatural as some men imagine? Is it not evident that by breaking the fetters of the Romans, Trajan would have pre-

served the greatest authority over a people set free by his generosity; that he would have then derived from love and gratitude almost all the power he owed to his army. Now what can be more flattering than the first of these powers! Few princes have imitated Trajan; few men, I confess, have made a sacrifice of their private authority to the interest of the public: but their excessive love of despotism is sometimes less the want of virtue, than the want of discernment.

10. (p. 318.) There is but one thing really contrary to every sort of constitution, and that is the misery of the people. Though a prince command them, he has no right to injure them. If he knowingly make a treaty disadvantageous to his people, he exceeds his power, and renders himself criminal toward them.

A monarch can never have any more right than his ancestors. Now every legitimate sovereignty is founded on election, on the free choice of the people. It is therefore evident that every supreme magistrate, whatever title he bear, is nothing more than the first deputy or commissioner of his nation; and no commissioner has a right to make a contract disadvantageous to those that appoint him. The society may at all times even annul its own appointments if they be too oppressive.

When two nations conclude a treaty, they have, like private persons, no other object than their reciprocal advantage and happiness; when this reciprocal advantage no longer subsists, the treaty becomes void: one of the two nations may break it. Ought they to do it? No: if there result but a small damage to them from observing it; for then it would be better to suffer that damage, than be regarded as too easy violators of their engagements. Now in the motives themselves that make those two people observe their treaty, we see the right that every people have to annul a treaty, when it is evidently destructive to their happiness.

11. (p. 319.) If in despotic governments the military be inwardly hated and despised, it is because the people regard the beys and pachas as jailors and hangmen. If in the Greek and Roman

NOTES ON SECTION IX.

Roman republics the soldier was, on the contrary, loved and respected, it was because, armed against the common enemy, he would not march against his countrymen.

12. (p. 319.) Is it enough that a sultan rules by virtue of a law to render his authority legitimate : No : a usurper might by such a law, it may be said, declare his reign legitimate twenty years after his usurpation. Such an opinion is absurd. No society can, at the time of its establishment, put into the hands of a man the power of disposing of the property, the lives, and the liberty of the citizens at his pleasure. All arbitrary power is an usurpation against which a people may at all times revolt.

When the Romans would enervate the courage of a people, render them ignorant and base, in order to keep them in servitude, what did they ! Set a despot over them. It was by this mean they enslaved the Spartans and the Britons. Now every constitution formed to corrupt the manners of the people, every form of government which the conqueror imposes for this purpose on the conquered, can never be cited as just and legal. Is that a government where all is reduced to the pleasing and obeying a sultan, where we sometimes meet a straggling inhabitant, but never a citizen ?

Every people, that groan under the yoke of arbitrary power have a right to throw it off. The laws that are sacred are such as are conformable to the public interest; every ordinance contrary to it is not a law, but a legal abuse.

13. (p. 320.) As a despot has not a force sufficient to subdue a nation by himself, he must effect it by the aid of his janissaries, his soldiers, and his army. If he displease that army it revolts, and he is then without force : the scepter changes hands ; he is condemned by those that were his associates ; he is not judged, he is murdered. It is otherwise with the king who reigns by the authority of the magistrates and the laws. If he commit a crime punishable by those laws, he is at least heard in his defence, and the slowness of the proceeding always gives him time to prevent judgment

NOTES ON SECTION IX.

judgment being given against him, by repairing the injustice he has done.

A prince on the throne of a limited monarchy is always more firmly seated than a despot.

14. (p. 341.) The justice of heaven has ever been a mystery. The church thought formerly that in duels and combats God always took the part of the offended. Experience has disproved this opinion of the church. We see that in duels heaven is always on the side of the strongest and most skilful; and in battles on the side of the best troops and most able general.

15. (ibid.) Few philosophers have denied the existence of a creative power; "There is a cause of that which is, and that cause is unknown." Now whether we give to this cause the name of God, or any other, what matters it? The disputes on this subject are but about words; it is not so with the moral Divinity. The opposition that is always found between the justice on earth and that of heaven, has frequently made his existence doubtful. Besides it has been said, what is morality? Is it a collection of the conventions that the reciprocal wants of men have obliged them to make with each other! Now how can a god be made of the works of men?

16. (p. 356.) The proof of our little faith is the contempt we have for those that change their religion. Nothing is certainly more commendable than to abandon an error to embrace the truth; whence then arises our contempt for a new convert? From the obscure conviction we have that all religions are equally false*, and therefore whoever changes his religion is influenced by some sordid, and consequently contemptible, motive.

17. (p. 358.) If the Morality of the Jesuits had been the work of

* Our author, when speaking of false religions, must be always understood to except the Christian, or he would be continually contradicting himself. T.

a laic,

a laic, it would have been condemned as soon as printed; there are no persecutions which its author would not have suffered.

Before the parliaments interfered, that morality however was the only one generally taught in France. The bishops approved it. The Sorbonne feared the Jesuits; that fear rendered their principles respectable. In such cases, it is not the matter, but the author, that the clergy judge: they have always two weights and two measures: St. Thomas is an example. Machiavel, in his Prince, no where advances such propositions as that saint teaches in his Commentaries on the 5th of the Politics, text xi. These are his own words.

"For the preservation of tyranny, men of great power and "riches must be destroyed, for such by their power may rise "against the tyrant. It is also expedient to destroy men of ta-"lents, for such by their talents may find means to expel ty-"ranny. Nor should schools be permitted, or other assemblies, "by which learning may be acquired; for learned men have "great dispositions, and are magnanimous, and such men easily "rebel. For the support of tyranny it is proper that the tyrant "contrive to make his subjects accuse each other of crimes, and "molest each other, so that friends may attack friends, the mean "people the rich, and the rich one another; for by their divisions "they will be the less able to rise against him. It is also neces-"sary to impoverish the people, for they will be thereby less "able to rise against the tyrant. Taxes should be established, "that is, exactions, which should be great, and in great number; "for thereby the subjects will be the sooner impoverished. The "tyrant should excite wars among his subjects, or else among "strangers, so that the people may have no opportunity to con-"spire against the tyrant. A kingdom is supported by friends; "but a tyrant ought not to trust to friends for the maintenance of "tyranny.

"It is expedient that a tyrant, for the support of tyranny, do "not appear severe or cruel to his subjects: for by appearing "cruel

NOTES ON SECTION IX.

" cruel he will render himself odious; which will make the peo-
" ple more readily rise against him: but he ought to render him-
" self respectable by an excellence in some eminent virtue: for
" all respect is due to virtue; and if he have no such excellent
" quality, he ought to appear to have it. The tyrant ought so to
" deport himself as to appear to his subjects to excel in some
" eminent virtue in which they are deficient, and for which they
" may respect him. If he have no " virtues, let him so deceive
" them, that they may think he has."

Such are the ideas of St. Thomas on this matter. Whether he regarded tyranny as an impiety or not, I may say with Naude, these are very strange precepts in the mouth of a saint. I shall further observe that Machiavel in his Prince is nothing more than the commentator of St. Thomas. Now, if for offering the same ideas one writer be sanctified, and his applauded works be put into the hands of all the world, and the other on the contrary be excommunicated, and his book condemned; it is evident that the church has two weights and two measures, and that its interest alone dictates its judgments.

18. (p. 359.) The monks still dispute, but they no longer reason. When their opinions are opposed, and objections are made to them, they cannot answer: they affirm that they have been a long time fixed in their determinations, and in that case this answer is certainly the most artful. The people, it is true, now more discerning, know that the book prohibited is that, whose maxims are in general most conformable to the public welfare.

19. (ibid.) If the hope of reward can alone excite men to the search after truth, an indifference for it supposes a great disproportion between the recompence annexed to its discovery, and the pains required in its investigation. Why is the discoverer of a truth so often the object of persecution? Because the envious and the wicked have an interest in his persecution. Why does the public at first take part against the philosopher? Because the public is ignorant, and being deceived at first by the cries of the fanatics, it becomes intoxicated with their fury. But it is with the

public

NOTES ON SECTION IX.

public as with Philip of Macedon, we may always appeal from the drunken public to the sober public. Why do men in power rarely make use of the truths discovered by philosophers? Because they rarely give themselves any concern about the public welfare. But suppose they were anxious about it, and patronised the truth, what would be the consequence? It would be propagated with an incredible rapidity. It is not so with error: when favoured by a potentate, it is generally, but not universally adopted. The truth has always its secret partisans: they form, as it were so many conspirators, always ready, when opportunity offers, to declare for it. One word of a sovereign is sufficient to destroy error; but as for truth, its root is indestructible: it is doubtless barren till fertilised by power; but it still subsists; and if the root owe its branches to power, it owes its existence to philosophy.

20. (p. 364.) Among the ecclesiastics there are without doubt some men that are honest, happy, and void of ambition; but these are not called to the government of that powerful body. The clergy, always governed by men of intrigue, will be always ambitious.

21. (ibid.) The church, constantly employed in promoting its power, reduces all the Christian virtues to abstinence, humility, and a blind submission: it never preaches the love of our country, nor of humanity.

22. (p. 370.) If the church sometimes forbids the laity to murder their prince, it always permits it to the clergy. This is proved by its own history. It is true, the theologians will say, the popes have deposed some sovereigns, preached up crusades against them, and beatified such men as Clement; but those levities were the faults of the pontiff, and not of the church. With regard to the culpable silence of the bishops on this matter, it was, they add, the effect of a complaisance for the papal chair, and not an approbation of its conduct. But ought they to have been silent when such crimes were committed, and to have risen with so much

fury

fury against the pretended extravagant interpretation that Luther and Calvin gave of certain passages of scripture? Should men persecute error, and at the same time suffer the most henious crimes to escape? Every man of sense must see, in the perpetually equivocal conduct of the church, that it had in reality but one view, and that was to be able, according to its various interests, by turns to approve or disapprove the same actions.

There is no proof of its ambition more evident than the project invented by the Jesuits of associating great men, princes, and even monarchs in their order; by that association, into which so many great men had already entered, kings became the subjects of the Jesuits and their general, and were nothing more than the vile executioners of their persecutions.

But for the parliaments, who knows if this project, so boldly conceived, had not succeeded?

23. (p. 376.) There is no inquisition in France: however, says the church, they there imprison at my desire the Jansenist, the Calvinist, and the Deist. They therefore tacitly acknowledge the right I have to persecute. Now this right which the prince gives me over his subjects, I only wait an opportunity to claim over himself and his magistrates.

24. (ibid.) The church calls herself the spouse of God; but wherefore I know not. The church is an assembly of the faithful; these faithful are bearded or unbearded, shod or unshod, cowled or uncowled; now that such an assembly should be the spouse of the Divinity is a pretension beyond measure, stupid and ridiculous. If the word Church, *(Eglise)*, had been masculine, how would they have consummated the marriage?

25. (p 381.) The church of France now refuses the pope the right to dispose of crowns; but is the refusal of that church sincere, is it the effect of conviction? Its past conduct must inform us. What respect can the clergy have for a human law, when they pretend, in quality of interpreters of the divine law, to the power of changing and modifying it at their will. Whoever assumes

sumes the right of interpreting a law, always concludes by making a law. The church in consequence makes itself God; though there be nothing less alike than the religion of Jesus and that of the present papists.

How would the apostles be surprised, if they were to come again upon the earth and read a catechism they have not made; if they should be told that the clergy have lately forbidden the laity even to read the scriptures, under the idle pretence of being scandalised by their weakness.

I shall mention on this occasion a singular event; it is an act of the English parliament, passed in 1414. In this act it is forbiden under pain of death, to read the scriptures in the vulgar tongue, that is, in a language they understood. What, say the reformed, has God collected in a book the duties that he enjoins men to perform; and has this God, who is omniscient, explained his will so obscurely, that we cannot understand it without an interpreter? Does not that Almighty Being, who has created man, know the extent of his understanding! O priest, what ideas have you of the Divine wisdom?

Did the young man of Abbeville, who was prosecuted for pretended blasphemy, ever pronounce any thing so horrible? He however was punished with death, and you are respected. So true it is, that there is nothing but good luck and bad luck in this world, and that there is no man just but he who has power.

26. (p. 383.) Governments are the judges of actions, and not of opinions. If I advance a gross error, I am punished by ridicule and contempt; but if in consequence of an erroneous opinion I attempt to violate the liberty of other men, it is then I become criminal.

If, being a devout adorer of Venus, I burn the temple of Serapis, the magistrate ought to punish me; not as a heretic, but as a disturber of the public peace; as an unjust man who being free in the exercise of my own worship, would deprive my fellow-citizens of the liberty I enjoy myself.

27. (p. 385.)

NOTES ON SECTION IX.

27. (p. 385.) The expulsion of the Jesuits from Spain and Portugal shews the ministers to have been of a bold and firm character. In France, the knowledge already diffused among the people facilitated that expulsion. If the pope had complained too bitterly, his complaints would have appeared ill-placed.

In a letter written on the subject of the condemnation of the mandate of M. Soissons, by the congregation of the holy office, a virtuous cardinal remonstrated to the holy father, "that there are "certain pretensions which the court of Rome ought to bury in "eternal oblivion; especially, he added, in these unhappy and "deplorable times, when the infidels and the impious make the "fidelity of the ministers of religion suspected."

Now what do the words *infidel* and *impious* mean in the ecclesiastical language? The opposers of the power of the clergy. It is therefore to the infidels that kings owe their security, the people their tranquility, the parliaments their existence, and the ambition of the sacerdotal power its moderation. These impious as they are called, ought to be the dearer to the French nation, as there is nothing to fear from them. The philosophers form no separate body; they are without authority; besides, it is impossible, as mere citizens, that they should ever have any interest which is not connected with that of the public, under a discerning government.

28. (p. 386.) What means are there of forming virtuous citizens in Catholic countries? The instruction of youth is there confided to priests: now the interest of the priest is almost always contrary to that of the state. Never will a priest adopt this fundamental principle of all virtue, which is, "that the justice of our "actions depends on their conformity, with the general interest." Such a principle opposes his ambition.

Besides, if morality, like other sciences, cannot be improved but by time and experience, it is evident that a religion which pretends, in consequence of its being revealed, to instruct men in all their duties, must the more efficaciously oppose the improve-

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NOTES ON SECTION IX.

ment of that science, as it leaves nothing to be done by genius and experience.

29. (p. 387.) At the time that France was engaged in a war with England, the parliaments were making war on the Jesuits, and the devout court took part with the latter; in consequence every one there was busied with ecclesiastical intrigues. One would have imagined it to be the end of the reign of Lewis XIV. They then reckoned at Versailles a few honest men, and a great number of bigots.

I shall be asked, without doubt, why I regard bigotry as so fatal to a state? Spain, it will be urged, subsists, and Spain has not yet thrown off the yoke of the inquisition. It is true; but that empire is weak; it does not excite any jealousy; it makes no conquest; and it has no commerce. Spain lies in a separate corner of Europe; it cannot in its present situation either attack or be attacked. It is not the same with another state. France, for example, is feared and envied: it is open on all sides; its commerce maintains its power, and its genius maintains its commerce. There is but one way of supporting industry, which is to establish a mild government, where the mind can preserve its spring, and the citizen his liberty of thought. If the darkness of ignorance be again spread over France, its industry will diminish, and its power daily decline.

A superstitious nation, like one subject to arbitrary power, is soon without morals, without spirit, and consequently without force. Rome, Constantinople, and Lisbon are proofs of this. If all the people there give themselves up to effeminacy and debauchery, it is not to be wondered at; for where men are forbidden the exercise of the mind, they will naturally resign themselves to that of the body.

SECTION X.

OF THE POWER OF INSTRUCTION: OF THE MEANS OF IMPROVING IT TO THE UTMOST: OF THE OBSTACLES THAT OPPOSE THE PROGRESS OF THIS SCIENCE.

OF THE FACILITY WITH WHICH, THESE OBSTACLES REMOVED, THE PLAN OF AN EXCELLENT EDUCATION MIGHT BE LAID DOWN.

CHAP. I.

EDUCATION IS CAPABLE OF EFFECTING EVERY THING.

THE strongest proof of the power of education is the proportion constantly observed between the diversity of instruction, and its different products or results. The Indian, indefatigable in hunting, is more swift in chace than the the civilized man*; because he is more exercised in it.

* The sagacity of the savages in distinguishing the track of a

The

The civilized man has more knowledge, he has more ideas than the savage, because he receives a greater number of different sensations, and is by his situation more interested to compare them with each other.

Therefore the superior agility of the one, and various knowledge of the other, are the effects of the difference of their education.

If men be commonly frank, loyal, industrious, and humane, under a free government; and mean, false, and vile, without genius, and without courage, under a despotic government, the difference in their characters is the effect of the different education received under those different governments.

From the several constitutions of states let us pass to the different conditions of men. What is the cause that so little sound judgment is to be found among theologians? The duplicity common to them in general results from their education; they are in this respect more assiduously instructed than other men; being accustomed from their youth to content themselves with the jargon of the schools, and to take words for things, it becomes impossible for them to distinguish truth from falsehood, or sophistry from demonstration.

man through a forest is incredible: they can tell by it his country, and the form of his person. To what shall we refer the superiority of the savage in this respect over the civilized man? To a multitude of experiments. Judgment of every kind is the child of observation.

The vices of ecclesiastics are the effect of education.

Why are the ministers of the altar the most dreaded of all men? Why does the Spanish proverb say, "take "heed of the head of a bull, of a woman before, of a "mule behind, and of a monk on all sides?" Proverbs being almost all founded on experience, are almost always true. To what then attribute the wickedness of the monk? To his education.

The Sphynx, the Egyptians said, was the emblem of a priest. The face of a priest is gentle, modest, insinuating; and the sphynx has that of a female. The wings declare it to be an inhabitant of heaven; its claws announce the power that superstition gives it upon earth; and its serpent's tail is a sign of its supple nature. Like the sphynx, the priest proposes enigmas, and throws into prison all who do not interpret them to his liking. The monk, accustomed from early youth to the practise of hypocrisy in his conduct and opinions, is in fact the more dangerous, as he has acquired a greater habit of dissimulation.

If a son of the church be the most arrogant of all the children of men, it is because he is continually puffed up by the homage of a great number of superstitious persons.

If a bishop be the most cruel of all men, it proceeds from his not being, like most men, exposed to danger and want; from an effeminate education that contracts his character; and from his being perfidious and cowardly; for there is nothing more cruel, says Montaigne, than weakness and cowardice. The soldier is commoly

monly in his youth ignorant and licentious. Why? Because he has no need of instruction. In his later years he is frequently a fool and a fanatic. Why? Because the days of debauchery being then past, his ignorance must make him superstitious.

There are few great talents among the polite world; this is the effect of their education. That of their childhood is too much neglected; false and puerile ideas alone are then engraved on their memories. To furnish them afterwards with such as are just and great, the former must be effaced: now this is always a work of time, and the boy becomes old before he is a man.

In almost all professions the instructive life is very short; the only way to prolong it is to form the judgment early. Let the memory be charged with no ideas that are not clear and determinate; adolescence will then become more intelligent than is now old age.

Education makes us what we are. If the Savoyard, from the age of six or seven years, be frugal, active, laborious, and faithful, it is because he is poor and hungry, and because he lives, as I have before said, with those that are endowed with the qualities required in him; in short, it is because he has for instructors example and want, two imperious masters whom all obey*.

* When we contract in infancy habits of labour, œconomy, and fidelity, it is with difficulty we depart from them; it i not

The talents of princes are the result of education.

The uniform conduct of the Savoyards results from the resemblance of their situation, and consequently the uniformity of their education. It is the same with that of princes. Why are they reproached with having nearly the same education? Because they have no interest to instruct themselves, having only to will, and obtain their real and imaginary wants. Now he who can without talents and without labour satisfy both of these, is without motive to information and activity.

Understanding and talents being never any thing more in men than the produce of their desires and particular situation*, the science of education may be reduced

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without a long intercourse with knaves, or passions extremely strong; and such passions are rare.

* It is to misfortune, to the severity of their education, that Europe owes such princes as Henry IV. Elizabeth, prince Henry, the princes of Brunswick, and, lastly, Frederic. It is in the cradle of calamity that great princes are nourished: their knowledge is commonly in proportion to the dangers they have experienced. If an usurper have almost always great talents, it is because his situation obliges him to have them. It is not so with his descendants: born on the throne, if they be almost always without genius, and think little, it is because they have little occasion to think. The love of arbitrary power in a sultan is the effect of idleness: he would free himself from the study of the laws; he wants to avoid the fatigue of attention; and that want does not influence the visir less than the sovereign. The influence of idleness on the several governments is unknown. Perhaps I was the first that discovered the constant proportion there is between the knowledge of the people, the force of their passions, and the form of

reduced perhaps to the placing a man in that situation which will force him to attain the talents and virtues required in him.

Sovereigns are not in this respect always the most happily placed. Great kings are extraordinary phenomena in nature. These phenomena are long hoped for, and seldom appear. It is always from the prince who is to succeed that we expect the reformation of abuses; he is to perform miracles. That prince ascends the throne; nothing is changed; the administration remains the same. Why, in fact, should we

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their government; and consequently the interest they have to acquire knowledge.

The savage or man of nature, solely employed in providing for his corporeal wants, is less intelligent than the polished man; and among such savages, the most discerning are those who find the most difficulty in gratifying the same wants.

Which of all the people of Africa are the most stupid? They that inhabit forests of palm-trees, whose trunks, leaves, and fruit furnish, without culture, all the wants of man. Happiness itself can sometimes stupify the spirit of a nation. England now produces few excellent works in morality and politics; its deficiency in this respect is perhaps the effect of its public felicity. Perhaps celebrated writers owe, in certain countries, the melancholy advantage of an extraordinary discernment, merely to the degree of misfortune and oppression uuder which their fellow-subjects groan.

Sufferings, when carried to a certain point, enlighten mankind; when carried beyond it, render them stupid. Will France remain for a long time intelligent!

expect, that a monarch, frequently worse educated than his ancestors, should be more wise?

The same causes will always produce the same effects

CHAP. II.

ON THE EDUCATION OF PRINCES.

"A King born on the throne is rarely worthy of it," said a French poet. Princes in general owe their genius to the austerity of their education, to the dangers that surround their infancy, and the misfortunes they have felt. The more severe the education, the more wholesome it is to those who are one day to command over others.

It is in times of trouble aud discord that sovereigns receive this sort of education; at other times they have nothing more given them than a ceremonial instruction, as bad, and often as difficult to change, as the form of government of which it is the effect *.

What can be expected from such instruction?

* In every despotic government where the manners are corrupted, that is, where private interest is detached from that of the public, the bad education of princes is the necessary effect of the bad form of government. All the East is a proof of this.

What

Education of a prince in Turkey.

What is in Turkey the education of the heir to the throne? The young prince, confined to a part of the seraglio, has for his company and amusement a woman and a tapestry-loom: if he go out of his retreat, it is once a week under a strong guard to visit the sultan, and return under the same guard to his apartment, where he finds the same woman and the same tapestry-loom. Now what idea can he acquire, in this retreat, of the science of government? This prince mounts the throne; the first object presented to him is a map of his vast empire; and what is recommended to him is, to be the lòve of his subjects and the terror of his enemies. But what is he to do to be the one and the other? He does not know. A want of the habit of application renders him incapable. The science of government becomes odious to him; he is disgusted with it; shuts himself up in his haram, and there changes his women and his visir; impales some, bastinades others, and thinks he governs. Princes are men, and as men they can produce no fruits but what spring from instruction.

In Turkey neither sultan nor subject thinks. It is the same in the several courts of Europe, in proportion as the education of their princes approaches that of the East.

The result of this chapter is, that the virtue and vices of men are always the effects of their different situations, and the different instruction they receive.

This

This principle admitted, suppose we would determine the best plan of education for every condition, what is to be done ?

1. Decide what are the talents and virtues essential to a man of such a profession.

2. Point out the means of compelling him to acquire (1) those talents and virtues.

Men in general reflect the ideas of those that surround them ; and the only virtues we can be sure to make them acquire, are the virtues of necessity. Convinced of this truth, if I would inspire my son with the social qualities. I would give him companions of nearly his own strength and age ; I would in this respect abandon the care of their mutual education, and not have them inspected by a master, but to moderate the rigor of their corrections. According to this plan of education, I should be sure that if my son was foppish, impertinent, conceited, or imperious, he would not remain so long.

A child cannot long sustain the contempt, insults, and railleries of his comrades : there is no social defect that such treatment will not correct. To be still more sure of success, it is necessary that he be almost always absent from the paternal dwelling ; and that he do not return in the vacations and holidays, to catch again, from a conversation with the people of the world, the vices his fellow-pupils had effaced.

In general, that education is the best where the

child, most distant from his parents, has least opportunity of mixing incoherent ideas with those which he ought to acquire in the course of his studies (2). It is for this reason that a public education will always excel a private.

There are too many people however of a different opinion, to permit me to pass this matter over without a further explanation.

CHAP. III.

OF THE ADVANTAGES OF A PUBLIC OVER A DOMESTIC EDUCATION.

The first of these advantages is the salubrity of the place where youth receive their instructions.

In a domestic education the child lives in the paternal house; and that house, in great cities, is frequently small and unwholesome.

In public education the house on the contrary, is in the country, and may be so spacious as to admit of all the exercises proper to fortify the body, and preserve the health of youth.

The second advantage is the rigour of the discipline. In the paternal house discipline is never so exactly

observed

observed as in a public education. In a college all is subject to the hour: the clock there regulates both masters and domestics: it determines the duration of meals, study, and recreation: the bell constantly preserves order; and without order there can be no regular studies: order lengthens the days; disorder contracts them.

The third advantage of public instruction is the emulation it inspires. The principal incentives of early youth are fear and emulation. Now emulation is produced by comparing ourselves with a great number of others. Of all the means of exciting a love of talents and virtue, this is the most certain; but a child in the paternal house has no opportunity of making these comparisons, and his instruction is so much the more imperfect.

The fourth advantage is the discernment of the instructors. Among men, and consequently among fathers, there are discerning and stupid: the latter know not what instruction to give their children; the former know what learning they should have, but are ignorant of the manner of making them easily conceive the ideas. This is a practical knowledge, soon acquired in a college, either by experience or tradition, but frequently unknown to the most intelligent parents.

The fifth advantage of a public education is firmness. A domestic education is seldom resolute. Parents, solely concerned for the corporeal advantages of their children, and fearful of making them uneasy, indulge

dulge all their humours, and give to a mean compliance the name of parental affection*.

Such are the several reasons that will always make a public education preferable to a private. It is from the first alone that patriots are to be expected. That alone can strongly connect in the mind of the people the ideas of private and public happiness. I shall expatiate no further on this subject.

I have shewn all the power of education.

I have proved that in this matter the effects are always in proportion to the causes.

I have shewn how much public education is preferable to a private.

I should here enumerate the almost insurmountable obstacles that in most governments oppose the ad-

* There is no mother who does not pretend to have a violent love for her son: but if by the word *love* is meant a desire to promote his happiness, and consequently his instruction, there are scarcely any of them that may not be accused of indifference. What mother, in fact, studies the education of her children, reads the best books on the subject, and endeavours to understand them? Do they act in the same manner when they have an important cause to manage? No: there is no woman who does not then consult her lawyer, and consider his opinions. She that should do neither the one nor the other, would be regarded as indifferent to the success of her cause. The degree of attention paid to any affair, is the measure of the degree of solicitude we have for its success. Now if this rule be applied to the care commonly taken in the education of children, nothing will be found more rare than maternal love.

vancement

vancement of this science, and the facility with which, those obstacles being removed, education might be carried to the highest degree of improvement.

But before enumerating these particulars, I think I should point out to the reader the several parts of instruction to which the legislature should pay a particular attention. For this purpose I shall divide education into two sorts, the one corporeal, the other intellectual.

CHAP. IV.

A GENERAL IDEA OF CORPOREAL EDUCATION.

The object of this education is to render men robust and healthful, consequently more happy, and generally useful to their country, that is, most proper for the several employments to which the national interest may call them.

The Greeks, convinced of the importance of corporeal education, honoured gymnastic exercises (S), and made them part of the instruction of their youth: they employed them in their medicinal regulations, not only as a preservative, but as a specific, to fortify this or that member, weakened by disease or accident.

Perhaps

Perhaps it will be expected that I should here describe the games and exercises of the ancient Greeks; but what can I say on this subject that is not to be found in the memoirs of the Academy of Inscriptions, where may be seen even the manner in which Lacedæmonian nurses began the education of the Spartan children?

But was the science of gymnastics carried by the Greeks to the highest degree of perfection? I know not.

After the establishment of these exercises, it is to be determined by an able surgeon and physician only, informed by daily experience, of what degree of improvement this science is still susceptible. I shall only observe on this subject, that corporeal education is neglected by almost all European nations: not that governments directly oppose improvements in this part of education; but that exercises of this sort being no longer in vogue, are no longer encouraged.

There is no law that forbids the laying out of a suitable ground in a college, where the students of a proper age may exercise themselves in wrestling, running, leaping, swimming, throwing or lifting of weights, &c. If in this ground, constructed in imitation of the gymnasium of the Greeks, prizes were to be decreed for the conquerors, there is no doubt but they would rekindle in youth the natural disposition they have for such games. But may not the minds and the bodies of young people be both exercised at the same time? Why not

not? Let them surpress in colleges those vacations during which children return to their parents to weary themselves with idleness, and neglect their studies; and let their daily recreations be enlarged. A child may consecrate every day seven or eight hours to his serious studies, and four or five to exercises more or less violent; and thus he will at once invigorate both body and mind.

The plan of such an education is no master-piece of invention. Nothing more is necessary to the carrying it into execution than to rouse the attention of parents to this business. A good law would produce this effect*. Thus much may suffice for the corporeal

* A vigorous education should be given to youth; but can a plan of this sort take place in an age of luxury, when men are drunk with pleasure, and the government is become effeminate?

Effeminacy degrades a nation. But what is the degeneracy of their nation to the greatest part of the men in power? They are only solicitous that a favourite son be not exposed to the danger of a blow or a cold. There are perhaps fathers who, from a discerning and virtuous tenderness, desire that their children should be healthy and robust, and that they should be rendered such by vigorous exercise. But if these exercises be no longer in vogue, where is the father bold enough to brave the ridicule of an innovation; and if he do, what means are there to resist the cries and importunities of a weak and pusillanimous mother? Peace at home is to be purchased at any price. To change the manners of a people in this respect, the legislature must punish in parents a too effeminate education of their children, by shame and infamy; and not grant, as I have already said, any military employ to those

part of education. I shall now pass to the moral part, which is without doubt the least understood.

CHAP. V.

OF THE TIME AND THE SITUATION IN WHICH MAN IS SUSCEPTIBLE OF A MORAL EDUCATION.

MAN, as an animal, feels different corporeal wants; these several wants are so many tutelar genii, created by nature to preserve his body, and enlighten his mind. It is from heat, cold, hunger, and thirst that he learns to bend the bow, to aim the arrow, to spread the net, to cover himself with a skin, to construct a hut, &c. As long as individuals live separate in forests they can have no moral education. The virtues of the polished man are the love of justice and his country; those of the savage are force and activity: his wants are his only instructors, the sole preservers of his spe-

who have not given proofs of a due strength, and a proper temperament of body.

Parents would then be interested in forming robust and healthful children: but it is only from such a law that we can expect such a happy change in corporeal education.

 cies,

cies, and that preservation seems to be the only intention of nature.

When men become multiplied and united in society; when the want of provisions obliges them to cultivate the earth, they make conventions among themselves, and the study of these conventions gives birth to the science of education. Its object is to inspire men with a love of the laws and of the social virtues. The more perfect the education, the more happy the people. Hence I observe, that the progress of this science, like that of legislation, is always in proportion to the progress of human reason, improved by experienee; which experience always supposes the union of men in society. We may then eonsider them from two points of view:

1. As citizens.
2. As citizens of this or that profession.

In these two situations they receive two sorts of instruetion; the most perfect is the latter. I have but little to say on this head, and it is for that reason I make it the first object of my examination.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

OF EDUCATION RELATIVE TO DIFFERENT PROFESSIONS.

When a youth is to be instructed in any art or science, the same means present themselves to all minds. I would make my son a Tartini*; I instruct him in the principles of music; I endeavour to make him fond of it: in his most early youth I put a violin into his hands; this is what is commonly done, and it is nearly all that can be done.

The progress of the child, more or less rapid, afterward depends on the ability of the master, his method of teaching, more or less improved; and lastly, the greater or less taste the scholar has for the instrument.

In like manner, when a rope-dancer would teach his sons his own trade, if from their most tender years he endeavour to give their bodies by exercise the utmost flexibility, he instructs them in the best manner possible. When a more difficult art is to be acquired, if for example we would form a painter; from the moment a youth is able to hold a pencil, he is taught to

* A celebrated player on the violin in Italy.

draw after the most correct prints, then after bass-reliefs, and lastly, after the most beautiful models. His memory is moreover enriched with the grand and sublime images that are to be found in the poems of Virgil, Homer, Milton, &c. The pictures of Raphael, Guido, and Correggio are placed before his eyes, and he is made to remark their several beauties; he successively studies in those paintings the magic of design, composition, colouring, &c. lastly, his emulation is roused by a recital of the honours paid to celebrated painters.

This is all that an excellent education can do for a young painter: it is to the greater or less desire he has to render himself illustrious that he must owe his future progress. Now chance has a great influence over the force of his desire: a commendation given to a pupil at the moment he made a masterly stroke with his pencil, has sometimes been sufficient to animate him with a love of glory, and endow him with that determined attention which produces great talents.

But, it will be said, there is no man who is insensible to corporeal pleasure: all therefore must love glory, at least in a country where that glory is the representative of some real pleasure. It is true; but the greater or less force of that passion always depends on certain circumstances and situations; in short, on that same chance which presides, as I have proved in the second section, over all our discoveries. Chance therefore has always a share in the formation of illustrious men.

All

All that an excellent education can do, is to multiply the number of men of genius in a nation; it is to inoculate, if I may so say, good sense on the rest of the people: this it can do, and this is enough. The inoculation is full as valuable as any other.

The result of what I have here said is, that the part of instruction peculiarly applicable to different conditions and professions is in general sufficiently good. It is only necessary on one the hand to simplify the methods taught, which is the business of the master, and on the other to increase the spring of emulation, and that is the business of government.

With regard to the moral part of education, it is doubtless the most important, and the most neglected, There are no public schools in which the science of morality is taught.

What do pupils learn at college from the third form up to rhetoric? To make Latin verses. What time do they allot for the study of what they call ethics or morality? Scarcely a month. Can we then wonder to find so few men that are virtuous, and instructed in their duties toward society *?

To conclude; suppose that in a school for public instruction they propose to give the pupils a course of morality, what is to be done for this purpose? Let the

* Why do they not, by giving a new form to the civil government of Mr. Locke, explain to young people that book, which contains a part of the sound principles of morality?

maxims of this science, always fixed and determined, be derived from a simple principle, and from which may be deduced, as in geometry, an infinity of secondary principles. But this principle is not yet known; morality therefore is not yet a science; for they cannot honour with that name a heap of incoherent and contradictory principles*. Now if morality be not a science, what method is there of teaching it?

If I may be supposed to have at last discovered the fundamental principle of morality, it should be remembered that the interest of the priest will for ever oppose its publication; and that in every country we may always say, "No priest, or no true morality."

In Italy and Portugal it is not either religion or superstition they want.

* The Sorbonne, as well as the church, pretends to be infallible immutable. By what do we discover its infallibility and immutability? By its constancy in opposing every new idea. In other respects the Sorbonne is always contradicting its own decisions. It first protected Aristotle against Descartes, and excommunicated the Cartesians; then taught their system, gave to that same Descartes the authority of a father of the church, and adopted his errors to oppose truths the most clearly demonstrated. Now to what what shall we attribute so much inconstancy in the opinions of the Sorbonnists? To their ignorance of the true principles of all science. Nothing would be more curious than a collection of their contradictions in the successive condemnations they have issued against the thesis of the abbè Parades, the works of Rousseau, Marmontel, &c.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

OF THE MORAL EDUCATION OF MAN.

THERE are few good patriots; few citizens that are always just: Why? Because men are not educated to be just; because the present morality, as I have just said, is nothing more than a jumble of gross errors and contradictions; because to be just a man must have discernment, and they obscure in children the most obvious conceptions of the natural law.

But are children capable of conceiving adequate ideas of justice? This I know, that if by the aid of a religious catechism we can engrave on the memory of a child articles of faith that are frequently the most absurd, we might consequently, by the aid of a moral catechism, there engrave the precepts of an equity, which daily experience would prove to be at once useful and true.

From the moment we can distinguish pleasure from pain; from the moment we have done and received an injury, we have acquired some notion of justice.

To form the most clear and precise ideas of justice, what is to be done? Ask ourselves.

Q. What is man?

A. An animal, said to be rational, but certainly sensible, weak, and formed to propagate his species.

Q. What should man do as an animal of sensibility?

A. Fly from pain, and pursue pleasure. It is to this constant flight and pursuit that is given the name of self-love*.

Q. What should he also do as a weak animal?

A. Unite with other men, that he may defend himself against animals stronger than himself; or that he may secure a subsistence which the beasts would dispute with him; or lastly, that he may surprise such of them as are to serve him for nourishment; hence all the conventions relative to the chase and fisheries.

Q. What happens to man as being an animal formed to propagate his species?

A. That the means of subsistence diminish in proportion as the species is multiplied.

Q. What must he do in consequence?

A. When the lakes and the forests are exhausted of fish and game, he must seek new means of procuring subsistence.

Q. What are those means?

A. They are reduced to two. When the inhabitants

* He that would understand the true principles of morality should, with me, recur to the principle of corporeal sensibility, and seek in the wants of hunger, thirst, &c. the cause that compels men, already multiplied, to cultivate the earth, to unite in society, and to form conventions among themselves, whose observation or infraction makes men just or unjust.

are not yet very numerous, they breed cattle, and become pastors; but when they are greatly multiplied, and are obliged to find subsistence within a small compass, they must then cultivate the land, and become agriculturists.

Q. What does an improved cultivation of the land imply?

A. That men are already united in societies or villages, and have made compacts among themselves.

Q. What is the object of these compacts?

A. To secure the ox to his feeder, and the harvest to him that tills the land.

Q. What determines man to these compacts?

A. His interest and foresight. If there were another who could take the harvest from him who has ploughed the land and sowed the seed, no man would plough or sow; and the next year the village would be exposed to the horrors of a famine.

Q. What follows from the necessity of cultivation?

A. The necessity of property.

Q. How far do the compacts concerning property extend?

A. To my person, my thoughts, my life, my liberty, and my property.

Q. What follows from the compacts of property being once established?

A. Pains or punishments to be inflicted on those that violate them, that is, on the thief, the murderer, the fanatic, and the tyrant: abolish these punishments, and

and all compacts between men become void. From the moment any one can with impunity usurp the property of another, mankind return to the state of war; all society is dissolved, and men must fly from each other like lions and tygers.

Q. Are there punishments established in polished countries against the violators of the law of property?

A. Yes; at least in all those where goods are not in common (4), that is, in almost all countries.

Q. What renders this right of property so sacred, and for what reason have they almost every where made a god of it under the name of *Terminus*?

A. Because the preservation of property is the moral divinity of empires; as it there maintains domestic peace, and makes equity flourish; because men assemble but to secure their properties; because justice, which includes almost all virtues, consists in rendering to every one his own, and consequently may be reduced to the maintenance of the right of property; and because, lastly, the different laws have never been any thing more than the different means of securing this right to the people.

Q. But should not thought be included in the number of properties, and what is then meant by that word?

A. The right, for example, of rendering to God that worship which I think most agreeable to him. Whoever deprives me of this right, violates my property; and, whatever be his rank, he is punishable for it.

Q. Is

Q. Is there any case in which a prince may oppose the establishment of a new religion?

A. Yes, when it is intolerant.

Q. How is he then authorized?

A. By the public security: he knows that if such religion becomes dominant, it will become persecutive. Now the prince, being charged with the happiness of his people, ought to oppose the progress of such religion.

Q. But why cite justice as the root of all virtues?

A. Because from the moment that men, to secure their happiness, assemble in society, it is from justice that every one, by his good nature, humanity, and other virtues, contributes, as far as he can, to the felicity of that society.

Q. Supposing the laws of nature to be dictated by equity, what means are there of causing them to be observed, and of exciting in the minds of the people a love of their country?

A. These means are the punishments inflicted for crimes, and the rewards assigned to virtues.

Q. What are the rewards for virtues?

A. Titles, honours, the public esteem, and all those pleasures of which that esteem is the representative.

Q. What are the punishments for crimes?

A. Sometimes death; often disgrace, accompanied with contempt.

Q. Is contempt a punishment?

A. Yes; at least in a free and well governed country.

In

In such a country the punishment of contempt is severe and dreadful; it is capable of keeping the great to their duty: the fear of contempt renders them just, active, and laborious.

Q. Justice ought doubtless to rule empires; it ought to reign by the laws. But are laws all of the same nature?

A. No: some of them may be said to be invariable, and without them, society cannot subsist, at least not happily: such are the fundamental laws of property.

Q. Is it sometimes permissible to violate them?

A. No: except in extraordinary circumstances, where the welfare of the country is concerned.

Q. By what right are they then violated?

A. By the general interest, which knows but one invariable law:

Salus populi suprema lex esto.

Q. Ought all laws to give way to this?

A. Yes. If an army of Turks were marching to Vienna, the legislature, to famish them, might for a moment violate the right of property, destroy the harvest of the people, and burn their granaries, if they were likely to fall into the hands of the enemy.

Q. Are the laws so sacred that they can never be altered?

A. They ought to be altered when they are contrary to the happiness of the majority.

Q. But is not every proposal to alter them frequently regarded in a citizen as a criminal temerity?

A. It is: however, if man owe the truth to man; if a knowledge of the truth be at all times useful; if every one interested has a right to propose what he thinks will be of use to his associates; every citizen, for the same reason, has a right to propose to his nation what he thinks may contribute to the general felicity.

Q. There are however countries where the liberty of the press, and even that of thought, is proscribed?

A. Yes; because they imagined it more easy to rob the blind than the clear-sighted; and to dupe a people of ideots than of men of scienee. In every great nation there are always men interested in the misery of the public: they alone deny the citizens the right of informing their countrymen of the misfortunes to which one bad law will frequently expose them.

Q. Why are there not bad men of this sort in small and rising societies? Why are the laws there almost always wise and good?

A. Because the laws are there made by common consent, and consequently for the advantage of every one; and because the citizens not being numerous cannot form private associations against the general association, nor then detach their interest from that of the public.

Q. Why are the laws then so religiously observed?

A. Because no citizen is then more strong than the laws, and because his happiness is then connected with their observation, and his misery with their infraction.

Q. Among

Q. Among the various laws, are there not some that are called the laws of nature?

A. They are those, as I have already said, that concern property, and that we find established among almost all nations and polished societies, because societies cannot be formed without the aid of such laws.

Q. Are there other laws?

A. Yes; there are such as are variable, and those are of two sorts: the one are variable by their nature; and such are those that regard commerce, military discipline, taxes, &c. These may, and ought to change according to times and circumstances. The other, immutable by their nature, are only variable from their not being yet carried to perfection. In the number of these I place the civil and criminal laws, those that regard the administration of finances, the distribution of property, wills (5), marriages, &c. (6).

Q. Is the imperfection of these laws the mere effect of the idleness and indifference of legislatures?

A. Other causes concur with them, such as fanaticism, and conquest.

Q. If the laws established by one of these causes be favourable to knaves, what follows?

A. That they will be protected by those knaves.

Q. Should not the virtuous, for a contrary reason, desire their abolition?

A. Yes; but the virtuous are few in number; and are not always the most powerful. Bad laws in consequence are not abolished, and seldom can be.

Q. Why?

Q. Why?

A. Because genius is required to substitute good laws in the place of bad, and courage to make them received. Now in almost all countries the people in power have neither the necessary genius to form good laws, nor sufficient courage to establish them, and brave the clamour of evil designing men. If man love to govern other men, it is always with the least possible care and pains.

Q. Supposing a prince to have a desire to carry the science of the laws to perfection, what should he do?

A. Encourage men of genius to study this science, and direct them to resolve its several problems.

Q. What will then happen?

A. The variable laws, as yet imperfect, will cease to be so, and become invariable and sacred.

Q. Why sacred?

A. Because excellent laws being necessarily the work of experience and of sagacious judgment, are esteemed as revelations from heaven itself; because the observation of those laws may be regarded as the worship most agreeable to the Divinity, and as the only true religion; a religion that no power, not even God himself, can abolish; for to do evil is repugnant to his nature.

Q. Have not kings in this respect been sometimes more powerful than the gods?

A. Among princes there are some, doubtless, who by violating the most sacred laws of property, have made

made attempts on the possessions, the lives, and liberty of their subjects. They have received from heaven the power, but not the right to do harm: this right has never been conferred on any one. Can we imagine that, like the infernal spirits, princes are condemned to torment their subjects? What a horrid idea of sovereignty! Must the people be accustomed to see an enemy only in their monarch, and in his sceptre an instrument of torture?

It is evident from this sketch, to what a degree of perfection such a catechism might carry the education of a citizen; how much it would enlighten the subject and the monarch in their respective duties, and lastly, what just ideas it would give them of morality.

If the fundamental principle of the science of morals be reduced to the simple fact of corporeal sensibility, that science will be adapted to the capacity of men of all ages and all understandings: all may have the same idea of it.

From the moment we regard corporeal sensibility as the first principle of morality, its maxims cease to be contradictory; its axioms all linked together will bear the most rigorous demonstration; in short, its principles being freed from the darkness of speculative philosophy; will become evident, and the more generally adopted as the people will be the more clearly convinced of the interest they have to be virtuous (7).

Whoever

New axiom of morality.

Whoever shall elevate himself to this first principle, will see, if I may so say, at the first glance all the imperfections of a legislation: he will see if the bulwark opposed by the laws to such passions as are contrary to the public good, be sufficiently strong to support their efforts: if the law rewards and punishes in such just proportion as will necessitate men to virtue: lastly, he will perceive in that so much vaunted axiom of the present morality,

"Do unto others as thou wouldst they should do unto thee,"

only a secondary, domestic maxim, and one that is always insufficient to inform mankind of what they owe to their country. He will presently substitute for it that axiom which declares,

"That the public good is the supreme law,"

an axiom that includes, in a manner more general and more explicit, all that is useful in the former, and is applicable to all the different situations in which a citizen may find himself; that agrees equally well with the private man, the judge, the minister, &c. It is, if I may so express myself, from the sublimity of such a principle, that, descending even to the local conventions, which form the customary law of each people, every one may instruct himself in the particular nature of his engagements, in the wisdom or folly of the laws and customs of his country, and form a more just judgment of them, as he will more ha-

 bitually

bitually present to his mind the grand principles by which are estimated the wisdom, and even the equity of the laws.

We may therefore furnish youth with sound and determinate ideas of morality. By the aid of a catechism of probity we may carry this part of education to the highest degree of perfection: but what obstacles are there to surmount!

CHAP. VIII.

THE INTEREST OF THE PRIEST, THE FIRST OBSTACLE TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE MORAL EDUCATION OF MAN.

THE interest of the clergy, like that of every other body, changes according to time, place, and circumstance. Therefore every morality whose principles are fixed will never be adopted by the priesthood; they require one whose precepts being obscure and contradictory, and consequently variable, may be adapted to all the several positions in which they may find themselves.

The priest requires an arbitrary morality*, that al-

* There are no evident propositions that the theologians do not

lows him to legitimate to-day the action he will declare infamous to-morrow.

Unhappy is the nation that confides the education of the people to the priests! Only false ideas of justice which are still worse than none, can be expected from them. Whoever is without prejudice is the more ready to receive true knowledge, and the more susceptible of just instructions. But where are such instructions to be had? In the history of man, of nations, of their laws, and of the motives by which they were established, Now it is not from such sources that the clergy will permit the principles of justice to be drawn; their interest forbids it: they are sensible that the people, when enlightened by that study, will measure the esteem or contempt due to different actions by the scale of public utility: and what respect will they then have for bonzes, bramins, and their pretended sanctity? What has the public to do with their macerations, their hair-cloth, and blind obedience? The whole set of monastic virtues contribute nothing to the happiness of a nation. It is not so with the virtues of a citizen, that is, with

render problematical. We have seen them, according to times and circumstances, sometimes maintain that it is the prince, and sometimes the law, that ought to be obeyed; yet, neither reason, nor the interest of the monarch, leaves any doubt on this subject. Follow the law, said Lewis XII. notwithstanding the contrary orders that importunity may sometimes force from the sovereign. The law should be regarded as the determinate will of the prince; his orders, as the will of his ministers and favourites.

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generosity, veracity, justice, fidelity, friendship, sincerity, and the engagements made with the society to which we belong. These virtues are really useful. There is no resemblance between a saint and a virtuous citizen*.

Would the clergy, to be thought useful, pretend that it is to their prayers, and the effects of grace, that men owe their probity† ? Experience proves that the probity of man is the effect of his education: that a people are what the sagacity of their laws makes them: that modern Italy has more faith and less virtue than the ancient; and, to conclude, that it is always to the vices of administration we ought to refer the vices of individuals.

When a government ceases to be œconomical, contracts debts, acts indiscreetly, and, like the prodigal, begins by being a dupe, it ends by being a knave. When the great, by virtue of their power, think they

* A man may be religious under an arbitrary government, but not virtuous; for such government, by detaching the interest of individuals from that of the public, stifles in man the love of his country: consequently religion and virtue have nothing in common.

† If the number of priests be quadrupled in one country, and the number of patroles in another, which will be the least infested with robbers? Not that stocked with priests. Ten thousand a year in guards will consequently restrain more thieves and villains than forty thousand a year in priests. What a saving would this be to a nation! What a numerous expensive band of robbers are a whole clergy to a nation!

may

may do whatever they will, are without justice, and without honour ; under such governments the people will be without morals ; they will regard force as every thing and justice as nothing.

It is by the aid of a moral catechism, by recalling to the memories of men the motives of uniting in society, and their primitive, simple conventions, that we can give them clear ideas of equity : but the more explicit such a catechism is, the more strongly its publication will be opposed. Such a catechism would require for the instructors of youth, men skilful in the laws of nature and nations, and of the principal laws of each empire. Now such men would soon transfer to the temporal power the veneration conceived for the spiritual. The priests therefore would for ever oppose the publication of such a work, and their criminal oppositions would still find supporters. Sacerdotal ambition thinks all things lawful ; it vilifies. persecutes, blinds mankind, and appears constantly just in the eyes of its partisans.

If you reproach a monk with intolerance and cruelty, he will reply, that his situation requires them ; that he follows his function. Are there then professions in which men have a right to injure the public ? If there be, they should be abolished. Is not every man a citizen of a particular profession ? If there be any one that can justify criminality, why did they punish Cartouche ? He was the head of a band of robbers ; he robbed, he followed his function.

The clergy therefore have the power, but not the right, to oppose the improvement of the moral part of education.

The priests already dread an approaching change in public instruction; but their fear is panic. How far are men still from adopting a good plan of education! They will remain for a long time stupid. Let the Catholic church therefore rest satisfied that in an age so superstitious, its ministers will constantly preserve sufficient power efficaciously to oppose every useful reformation: necessity alone can triumph over their intrigues, and produce an alteration that is desirable, but impracticable, without the concurrence, favour, and protection of governments.

CHAP. IX.

THE IMPERFECTION OF MOST GOVERNMENTS, THE SECOND OBSTACLE TO THE MORAL EDUCATION OF MAN.

THAT is a bad form of government where the interests of the citizens are discordant and opposite; where the laws do not oblige them equally to concur in the public good. There are therefore few good governments.

ments. In those that are bad, what are the actions to which is given the name of virtues? Is it to such as are conformable to the interest of the majority? But such actions are often declared criminal by the edicts of power and the manners of the age. Now what honest precepts in such countries can be given to the people, and what means are there to engrave them deeply on their memories? I have already said that man receives two educations:

The one of childhood: which is given him by masters.

The other of adolescence; which he receives from the form of government, and the manners of the nation in which he lives.

When the precepts of these two parts of education are contradictory, those of the former become void.

If I inspire my son from his infancy with a love of his country, and compel him to attach his happiness to the practice of virtuous actions, that is, of actions useful to the majority; and if on entering the world he see patriots languish in contempt, misery, and oppression, and learn that virtuous men, hated by the rich and great, are rare in the city, and banished from the court, that is, from the source of favours, honours, and riches, (which are undoubtedly real possessions), it is one hundred to one that my son will regard me as an absurd dotard, a severe fanatic; that he will despise my understanding, and his contempt for me will be reflected on my maxims; and that he will give

himself

himself up to all those vices that are favoured by the form of government, and the manners of his compatriots.

If, on the contrary, the precepts given in childhood are recollected in youth: and if a young man on entering the world see the maxims of his masters honoured with the public approbation, then full of respect for those maxims, they will become the rule of his conduct, and he will be virtuous.

But in an empire like that of Turkey, let no one flatter himself with forming such men. Always in dread, and exposed to violence, is it in that state of inquietude that a citizen can be the friend of virtue and his country? His wish is to repel force by force. If he would secure his happiness, he must be strong; it is of little signification to be virtuous. But in an arbitrary government, who are the strong? They that please the despot, and his sub-despots. Then favour is a power: to obtain it, every thing is to be sacrificed. Is it to be acquired by baseness, falsehood, and injustice? A man becomes vile, a liar, and a knave. The man that is frank and sincere is misplaced in such a government, and would be impaled before the end of the year. In such a country, every villain who does not dread pain or death, may always justify the most infamous conduct.

Mutual wants, he will say, have forced men to unite in society: if they have built cities, it is because they have found more advantage in living together than

than separate: the desire of happiness has therefore been the sole principle of their union. Now the same motive, he will add, ought to force men to vice, when by the form of government, riches, honours, and happiness, are its rewards.

However insensible men may be to riches and grandeur, they must, in every country where the laws are too feeble efficaciously to protect the weak against the strong, where they see none but oppressors and oppressed, convicts and executioners, desire riches and honours, if not as the means of performing acts of injustice, at least as the means of avoiding oppression.

But there are arbitrary governments where applause is still lavished on the sages and heroes of antiquity; where people boast of their disinterested conduct, their elevation and magnanimity of soul. Be it so: but those virtues are now out of fashion; the praise of magnanimous men is in the mouth of every one, and in the heart of no body. No man is in his conduct the dupe of such eulogies.

I have seen the admirers of heroic times, who would have introduced the precepts of the ancients into their own countries: vain efforts! The forms of governments and religions forbid it. There are ages when reformation in public instruction should be preceded by some reformation in the administration of government and the public worship.

To what may the advice of a father to his son be reduced under a despotic government? To this shocking sentence: "My son, be base and groveling, with-

 "out

" out virtues, without vices, without talents, and with-" out character; be what the court would have thee, " and, every instant of thy life, remember thou art a " slave."

In such a country it will not be to instructors courageously virtuous, that a father will confide the education of his children: he would soon repent it. Suppose that at the time of Xerxes a Lacedæmonian had been appointed preceptor to a Persian lord, what would have been the consequence? Being brought up in the principles of patriotism and an austere frugality, the young man would have been odious to his countrymen, and, by a manly courageous probity, would have ruined his fortune. O thou Greek! too rigidly virtuous, the father would have cried, what hast thou done to my son! thou hast ruined him. I wished him to have that mediocrity of understanding, those soft and flexible virtues, to which in Persia are given the names of wisdom, prudent conduct, knowledge of the world, &c. Fine names, you will say, by which Persia disguises the vices that are sanctioned by its government. Be it so; I would have my son rich and happy: his wealth or his indigence; his life or his death, depend on the prince. This thou knowest, and shouldst have made him a skilful courtier; but thou hast made him nought but a hero and a virtuous citizen.

Such would have been the language of the father; and what reply could be made? The prudent part of

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the people would have added: How absurd, to give an honest and magnanimous education to a man destined by the form of government to be a vile courtier, an obscure villain. To what purpose inspire him with the love of virtue? Can he preserve it in the midst of corruption?

It follows therefore, that in every despotic form of government, and in every country where virtue is odious to men in power, it is equally insignificant and ridiculous to attempt the formation of virtuous citizens.

CHAP. X.

EVERY IMPORTANT REFORMATION IN THE MORAL PART OF EDUCATION, SUPPOSES ONE IN THE LAWS AND FORM OF GOVERNMENT.

When a man proposes to introduce a good plan of education in a vicious government, and flatters himself with making it acceptable, he deceives himself: the author of such a plan is too confined in his views to accomplish any thing great. If the precepts of a new education contradict the morals of a government, they are always reputed bad. At what time will they be adopted? When the people feel great misfortunes,

great oppressions, and a happy and singular concurrence convinces the prince of the necessity of a reform. Till that is not felt men may, if they will, meditate the principles of a good education; its discovery must precede its establishment: besides the more we cultivate a science, the more new truths we discover relative to it, and the more simple its principles become. But let us not hope to see them adopted.

Some illustrious men have thrown great light on this subject; education however is still the same. Why? Because a clear discernment is sufficient to form a good plan of education, but power is required to establish it. It is not therefore wonderful that the best plans of this kind have not hitherto produced any sensible alteration. But ought these works therefore to be regarded as useless? No: they have really advanced the science of education. A mechanic invents a new machine; he calculates its effects, and proves its utility; the science is thereby improved: the machine is not made; the public therefore receives no benefit from it; but it is discovered. There wants only a man of fortune to construct it, and, sooner or later, such a man will be found.

Let an idea so flattering encourage philosophers to study the science of education. If there be a search worthy of a virtuous citizen, it is that of truths which may be one day useful to mankind. What a consolatory hope it is to our labours that we are promoting the happiness of posterity! The discoveries of philo-

sophers

sophers are in this respect so many seeds sown in good minds, that only wait a favourable event to make them spring up ; and sooner or later that event will arrive.

The moral universe is, in the eyes of the undiscerning, in a constant state of repose and immobility ; they think that all things have been, and will be, as they are ; they see nothing in the past and future, but the present. It is not so with the intelligent : the moral world presents to them a perpetual revolution ; the universe, continually in motion, appears to them forced to produce incessantly new forms, even to a total exhaustion of all its combinations ; till all that can be has been, and imaginary beings can no longer be conceived.

The philosopher therefore perceives, at a greater or less distance, the time when power will adopt the plan of instruction presented by wisdom ; and let him, animated by this hope, endeavour previously to undermine those prejudices that oppose the execution of his plan.

If we would erect a magnificent monument, we should, before we lay its foundation, chuse the ground, pull down the ruins with which it is incumbered, and clear away the rubbish. Such is the business of the philosopher ; let him not be accused of constructing no new edifice* ; it is he that now substitutes a mora-

* It has been long said of philosophers that they destroy all and

lity

lity that is clear, sound, and deduced from the very wants of man, for one that is obscure, monastic, and fanatic, the scourge of the present and of past ages: it is to the philosophers, in fact, that mankind will owe this first and sole principle of morality; *the public good is the supreme law.*

There are certainly few governments that conduct themselves by this law; but to impute this fault to the philosophers is to make a crime of their impotence. When the architect has given a complete plan of a palace, he has performed his part: it is for the state to purchase the ground, and provide the funds necessary for its construction. I know that it is put off for a long time; that they prop up the old palace a long while before they erect a new one; and during that time the plans are useless; they lie dormant, but they will be at length brought forth.

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build nothing: they will no longer incur this reproach. Should the modern Hercules moreover strangle the monstrous errors only, they will still merit the approbation of mankind. The accusation brought against them on this account arises merely from the inclination men in general have to believe every thing, whether truth or falsehood. It is in early youth that we are made to contract this inclination; which in time becomes a desire that is continually greedy of gratification. When a philosopher destroys one error, men are always ready to say to him, with what other will you replace it? They resemble a sick man, who says to his physician, Doctor, when you have cured me of my fever, what other disorder will you give me in lieu of it?

The

The architect of the moral edifice is the philosopher: the plan is drawn; but the greatest part of religions and governments oppose its execution. When the obstacles opposed by a stupid religion or tyranny to the progress of morality are removed, mankind may flatter themselves with seeing the science of education carried to the highest degree of perfection of which it is susceptible.

Without entering into the detail of the plan of a good education, I have at least pointed out the principal parts that are to be reformed; I have shewn the reciprocal dependence that subsists between the moral part of education and the different forms of government: and lastly, I have proved that a reformation in one cannot be produced without a reformation in the other.

This truth being clearly demonstrated, the attempt can no longer appear impossible: being assured that the excellence of education depends on the excellence of the laws, there is no longer any occasion to attempt to reconcile irreconcileables.

If I have marked out the spot where the mine should be dug, future men of letters, better informed in their researches on this subject, will no longer wander in vain speculation, and I shall spare them the fatigue of useless labour.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

OF INSTRUCTION, AFTER THE OBSTACLES THAT OPPOSE ITS PROGRESS ARE REMOVED.

WHEN honours and rewards are always decreed in a country to merit, when public and private interest are constantly united, the moral education in that country will be necessarily excellent, and the people necessarily virtuous.

Man (experience proves) is by nature an imitator, an ape; if he live in the midst of honest citizens, he will become honest, when the precepts of his instructors are not contradicted by the national manners. When maxims and examples equally concur to excite in men the desire of talents and virtue; when the citizens regard vice with horror, and ignorance with contempt, they will be neither fools nor knaves: the idea of happiness being connected in our minds with that of merit, and the love of felicity will compel us to the love of virtue.

When I see honours heaped on those who have rendered themselves useful to their country; when I meet with none but discerning citizens, and hear none but honest discourses, I learn to be virtuous, if I may so say, as we learn our native language without perceiving it.

In

The excellence of education depends on the government.

In every country, if we except the powerful, the wicked are those that the laws and instruction have made so (8).

I have shewn that the excellence of moral education depends on the excellence of government: I may say as much of corporeal education. Every wise government endeavours to make the people not only virtuous, but strong and healthful. Such men are at once the most happy, and the most proper for the several employments to which the interest of the state may appoint them. Every sagacious government therefore will establish gymnastic exercises.

With regard to the latter part of education, which consists in making men illustrious in the arts and sciences, it is evident that its perfection also depends on the sagacity of the legislature. When the instructors of mankind are divested of a superstitious reverence for ancient customs, and the spring of their genius is allowed to exert its full force; when they are excited by the hope of rewards to improve the methods of instruction, and invigorate the desire of emulation (9), it is impossible, when encouraged by such hope, that intelligent masters, who have acquired the habit of managing the minds of their pupils, should not soon give to this part of education, already the most advanced, all the perfection of which it is susceptible.

Good or bad education, is almost entirely the work of the laws. But, it will be said, how much knowledge is necessary to frame such as are good? Less

than is imagined. It is sufficient for this purpose that the minister have the interest and desire to make such laws. Suppose, however, the legislature should want information, every virtuous and intelligent citizen would lend him assistance: good laws would then be made, and the obstacles that oppose the progress of instruction would be removed.

But are things that are doubtless easy in weak and rising societies, whose interests are simple, practicable in such as are rich, powerful, and numerous? How can the unlimited desire of man for power be there restrained? How ean the projects of the ambitious, who are leagued to enslave their fellow-citizens, be there prevented? and lastly, how constantly and efficaciously oppose that colossal and despotic power, which, founded on the contempt of talents and virtues causes the people to languish in indolence, fear, and misery?

In too extensive empires there is perhaps but one method of resolving, in a durable manner, the twofold problem of an excellent legislation, and a perfect education; whieh is, as I have already said, to divide those empires into a certain number of federative republics, which will be defended by their smallness against the ambition of their fellow-citizens, and by their confederation against the ambition of their neighbours.

I shall not extend this question further. What I proposed in this section was to give clear and simple ideas

ideas of corporeal and moral education; to determine the several sorts of instruction that should be given to men, to citizens, and to citizens of particular professions: to point out the reformations that should be made in governments, and the obstacles that now oppose the science of morality; and lastly, to show that these obstacles being removed, the problem of an excellent education will be almost entirely resolved.

I shall finish this chapter with the following observation, which is, that to throw more light on so important a subject, it is necessary to be well acquainted with man;

To determine the extent of the faculties of his understanding;

To shew the springs by which he is moved, and the manner in which those springs are put in action;

And lastly, to hint to the legislature new means of improving the great work of the laws.

If on these different subjects I have published some new and useful truths, I have fulfilled my undertaking; and have a right to the esteem and acknowledgment of mankind.

Among the great number of questions treated of in this work, one of the most important was to determine whether genius, virtue, and talents, to which nations owe their grandeur and felicity, were the effect of the difference of nourishment and temperament; in short, of the difference of the organs of the five senses, over which the excellence of the laws and ad-

ministration have no influence; or if the same genius, the same virtues, and the same talents were the effect of education, over which the laws and the form of government are all powerful.

If I have proved the truth of the latter assertion, it must be allowed that the happiness of nations is in their own hands, and that it entirely depends on the greater or less interest they take in improving the science of education.

To assist the reader's memory, I shall conclude this work by a recapitulation of the several principles on which I have founded my opinion; the reader will thereby the more readily estimate its probability.

RECAPITULATION.

After having in the Introduction to this work said a few words on its importance, and on the ignorance of mankind relative to the true principles of education, and lastly, of the dryness of the subject, and the difficulty of treating it, I have examined,

SECTION I.

" Whether education, necessarily different in different men, be not the cause of that inequality of understandings hitherto attributed to the unequal perfection of their organs."

To

Recapitulation of the subjects treated of in Section I.

To this purpose I have inquired at what age the education of man begins, and who are his instructors.

I see that man is the pupil of every object which surrounds him, of all the positions in which chance has placed him, in short, of every incident that happens to him.

That these objects, positions, and incidents are not exactly the same for any two persons, and consequently no two receive the same instructions.

That if it were possible for two men to have the same objects before their eyes, these objects not striking them at the precise moment when their minds are in the same situation, will not, in consequence, excite in them the same ideas: therefore the pretended uniformity of instruction received, either in the schools or in the paternal house, is one of those suppositions whose impossibility is proved by facts, and by the influence that chance, independent of instructors, has, and always will have, on the education of childhood and youth.

These matters settled, I consider the extreme extent of the power of chance, and I examine,

Whether illustrious men do not frequently owe to it their taste for a particular sort of study, and consequently their talents and their success in that study.

If the science of education can be perfected without restraining the bounds of the empire of chance.

If the contradictions at present perceived among all the precepts of education, do not extend the empire of chance.

Recapitulation of the subjects treated of in Section II.

If these contradictions, of which I have given some examples, ought not to be regarded as effects of the opposition that is found between the religious system and that of the public prosperity.

If religions might not be rendered less destructive of the national felicity, and founded on principles more conformable to the general interest.

What those principles are.

If they might not be established by an intelligent prince.

If among the false religions there are not some whose worship has not been less opposite to the welfare of society, and consequently to the improvement of the science of education.

If agreeably to these several examinations, and on the supposition that all men have an equal aptitude to understanding, the mere difference in their education ought not to produce a differeuce in their ideas and their talents. Hence it follows, that the inequality in understanding cannot be regarded, in men commonly well organised, as a demonstrative proof of their unequal aptitude to acquire it.

I have examined,

SECTION II.

"If all men, commonly well organised, have not an "equal aptitude to understanding?"

I agree in the first place, that as all our ideas come to us by the senses, we ought to regard the mind or understanding either as the mere effect of the greater

or

or less degree of perfection in the five senses; or of an occult and indeterminable cause, to which has been vaguely given the name of organisation.

To prove the falsity of this opinion, we must have recourse to experience, form a clear idea of the word Mind or Understanding and distinguish it from the soul. This distinction made, we must observe.

On what objects the mind acts.

How it acts.

If all its operations are not reducible to the observing of the resemblances and differences, the agreements and disagreements that different objects have among themselves and with us; and if, in consequence, all judgments formed on corporeal objects are not mere sensations.

If it be not the same with judgments formed on ideas to which are given the names of abstract, collective, &c.

If in every case to judge and compare can be any thing else than *alternate inspection*, that is to say, *sensation.*

If we can feel the impression of objects without comparing them with each other.

If such comparison does not suppose an interest to compare them.

If that interest be not the sole and unknown cause of all our ideas, our actions, our pains, our pleasures, and, in short, our sociability.

Whence I observe, that as this interest, in its last analysis, takes its source in corporeal sensibility; this

sensibility is consequently the sole principle of human ideas and actions.

That there is no rational motive for rejecting this opinion.

That this opinion, once demonstrated and acknowledged as true, we must necessarily regard the inequality of understandings as the effect

Either of the unequal extent of the memory;

Or of the greater or less perfection of the five senses.

That in fact, it is neither the extent of the memory, nor the extreme acuteness of the senses, that produces, and must produce the extent of the understanding.

That with regard to the acuteness of the senses, men commonly well organised differ only in the degrees of their sensations.

That this small difference does not change the relation of their sensations to each other, and consequently has no influence over the understanding, which is not, and cannot be any thing else than a knowledge of the true relations which objects have to each other.

The cause of the different opinions of men.

That this difference is the effect of the uncertain signification of words, such as

Good,

Interest, and

Virtue.

That if words were precisely defined, and their definitions arranged in a dictionary, all the propositions of

of morality, politics, and metaphysics would become as susceptible of demonstration as the truths of geometry.

That from the moment the same ideas are annexed to the same words, all minds adopting the same principles, would draw from them the same conclusions.

That it is impossible, as all objects appear to all men to have the same relations, for men by comparing objects with each other, (either in the material world, as is proved by geometry, or in the intellectual world, which is proved by metaphysics), not to form the same conclusions.

That the truth of this proposition is proved by the resemblance of the tales of the fairies, philosophic tales, and religious tales of all countries, and by the uniformity of impositions, employed every where by the ministers of false religions, to preserve and increase their authority over the people.

From all these facts it results, that as the greater or less acuteness of the senses does not at all change the proportion in which objects strike us, all men, commonly well organised, have an equal aptitude to understanding.

To augment proofs of this important truth, I have added a demonstration of it in the same section, by another series of propositions. I have shewn that the most sublime ideas, once simplified, are by the consent of

of all philosophers, reducible to this clear proposition, *that white is white, and black is black.*

That every truth of this kind is comprehensible by all understandings; and that therefore there is not any one, how great and general soever it may be, which clearly represented, and disengaged from the obscurity of words, cannot be equally conceived by all men commonly well organised. Now to be equally able to comprehend the highest truths, is to have an equal aptitude to understanding, Such is the conclusion of the second section.

SECTION III.

The object of this section is an inquiry concerning the causes to which the inequality of understandings is to be attributed.

These causes are reducible to two.

The one is the unequal desire that men have of knowledge.

The other, the diversity of positions in which chance places them; a diversity from which results that of their instruction, and their ideas. To shew that it is to these two causes only we ought to refer the difference and inequality of understandings, I have proved that most of our discoveries are the gifts of chance.

That these same gifts are not granted to all.

This distribution however is not so unequal as is imagined.

That in this respect chance is less neglectful of us, than

than we are, if I may use the expression, neglectful of chance.

That in fact all men commonly well organised have an equal power of understanding, but that power is dead in them, when not put in action by some passion, such as the love of esteem, glory, &c.

That men owe to such passions only the attention proper to fecundate the ideas offered to them by chance.

That without passions their minds might be regarded in some measure as perfect machines, whose movement is suspended till the passions put in them in action.

Hence I conclude, that the inequality of understandings in men is the produce of chance, and of the unequal vivacity of their passions; but whether those passions are the effects of the strength of temperament, is what I examine in the following section.

SECTION IV.

I there demonstrate,

That men commonly well organised are susceptible of the same degree of passion.

That their unequal force is always the effect of the difference of situations in which chance has placed them.

That the original character of each man, (as Pascal observes), is nothing more than the produce of his first habits: that man is born without ideas, without passions, and without any other wants than those of hunger and thirst, and consequently without character: that

he

he often changes it without any change in his organisation: that those changes, independent of the greater or less acuteness of his senses, operate according to the changes that happen in his situation and ideas,

That the diversity of characters depends solely on the different manners in which the sentiment of self-love is modified in men.

That this sentiment, the necessary effect of corporeal sensibility, is common to all, and produces in all the love of power.

That this desire produces envy, the love of wealth, of glory, importance, justice, virtue, intolerance, in short, all the factitious passions, whose several names mean nothing more than the different applications of the love of power.

This truth established, I shew, by a short genealogy of the passions, that if the love of power be nothing more than the mere effect of corporeal sensibility, and if all men commonly well organised are sensible, all are consequently susceptible of the sort of passion proper to put in action the equal aptitude they have to understanding.

But can these passions be excited to an equal degree in all? Of this we may be certain, that the love of glory may be exalted in man to the same degree of force as the sentiment of self-love; that the force of this sentiment is in all men more than sufficient to give them the degree of attention which the discovery of the sublimest truths requires; that the human understanding is consequently susceptible of perfectibility;

ty; and lastly, that in men, commonly well organised, the inequality of talents can be nothing more than the effect of the difference of their education, in which difference I comprehend the situations in which chance has placed them.

SECTION V.

What I here propose is, to shew the errors and contradictions of those who adopt on this question principles different from mine, and refer the inequality of understandings to the unequal perfection in the organs of the senses.

No one has written better on this subject than M. Rousseau; I therefore cite him for an example. I shew, that always contradicting himself, he sometimes regards understanding and character as effects of the diversity of temperaments, and sometimes adopts the contrary opinion.

That it results from his contradictions on this subject.

That virtue, humanity, understanding, and talents are acquisitions.

That goodness is not the portion of man in his cradle.

That the seeds of cruelty are in corporeal wants.

That humanity is consequently in man always the produce of fear, or of education.

That M. Rousseau, after his first contradictions, falls incessantly into others; that he believes, by turns, education to be useful and detrimental.

† of

Recapitulation of the subjects treated of in Section VI.

Of the happy use that might be made, in public instruction, of some of M. Rousseau's ideas.

That, according to this author, we must not suppose childhood and early youth to be without judgment.

That the pretended advantages of mature age over youth are imaginary.

Of the eulogies given by M. Rousseau to ignorance; the motives that induced him to become its apologist.

That learning has never contributed to the corruption of manners; that M. Rousseau himself does not believe it.

Of the causes of the decline of empires; that among these causes the improvement of the arts and sciences cannot be cited:

And that their cultivation retards the ruin of a despotic empire.

SECTION VI.

I here consider the several evils produced by ignorance.

I prove that ignorance is not destructive of effeminacy.

That it does not secure the fidelity of the subject.

That it determines the most important questions without examination.

That of luxury given as an example.

I prove that this question cannot be resolved without comparing an infinity of objects with each other;

Without

Recapitulation of the subjects treated of in Section VI.

Without first annexing precise ideas to the word *luxury*, and then examining;

If luxury may not be useful and necessary, and if it always suppose intemperance in a nation.

Of the cause of luxury: if it may not be itself the effect of those public calamities of which it is accused of being the author.

If, to know the true cause of luxury, we must not go back to the formation of societies, and there trace the effects of the great increase of mankind.

Observe, if this increase does not produce among them a division of interest, and this division a too unequal distribution of the national wealth.

The effects produced by the too unequal partition of riches, and by their introduction into an empire.

The good and bad effects of riches.

The causes of the too great inequality of fortunes.

The means of opposing the too rapid accumulation of wealth in the same hands.

Of countries where money is not current.

What are in those countries the productive principles of virtue.

Of countries where money is current.

That money there becomes the common object of the desire of men, and the productive principle of their actions and their virtues.

Of the period when, like the sea, riches abandon certain countries.

Of the state in which a nation then is.

Recapitulation of the subjects treated of in Section VII.

Of the stupefaction that takes place of the loss of riches.

Of the several principles of activity in nations.

Of money, considered as one of these principles.

Of the evils occasioned by the love of money.

If, in the present state of Europe, the judicious magistrate ought to desire a too hasty diminution of this principle of activity.

That it is not in luxury, but in its productive cause, that we ought to look for the destructive principle of empires.

If we can use too much caution in examining questions of this nature.

If in such questions the precipitate judgment of ignorance do not frequently involve a nation in the greatest misfortunes.

If in consequence of what has been said, we ought not to hate and despise the protectors of ignorance, and in general all those who, by opposing the progress of the human mind, impede the improvement of legislation, and consequently the public happiness, entirely dependent on the goodness of the laws.

SECTION VII.

That it is the excellence of the laws, and not, as some pretend, the purity of religious worship, that can secure the happiness and tranquiiity of nations.

Of the little influence which religions have on the virtue and felicity of nations.

Of

Recapitulation of the subjects treated of in Section VII.

Of a religious spirit, destructive of the legislative spirit.

That a religion truly useful will force the people to become intelligent.

That men do not act consistently with their belief, but their personal advantage.

That more consistency in their determinations would render the popish religion more detrimental.

That speculative principles in general have little influence on the conduct of men, who obey only the laws of their country and their interest.

That nothing better proves the prodigious power of legislation than the government of the Jesuits.

That it has furnished that religious order with the means of making kings tremble, and of executing the most atrocious enterprizes.

Of atrocious enterprizes.

That these enterprizes may be equally inspired by the passions of glory, ambition and fanaticism.

The means of distinguishing the sort of passion that commands them.

Of the time when the interest of the Jesuits urges them to great crimes.

What sect in France can oppose their enterprizes.

That Jansenism alone is able to destroy the Jesuits.

That without the Jesuits we should never have known all the power of legislation.

That, to carry it to perfection, it is necessary to

have, like St. Benedict, a religious order; or, like Romulus or Penn, an empire or colony to found.

That in every other situation the legislative genius, constrained by manners and prejudices already established, cannot soar sufficiently high, nor dictate those perfect laws whose establishment would give to nations the greatest happiness possible.

That to resolve the problem of the public felicity, we must previously know what constitutes the happiness of man.

SECTION VIII.

In what consists the happiness of individuals, and consequently the happiness of a nation, necessarily composed of the happiness of all the individuals?

That to resolve this political problem, we must examine if men can be equally happy in every condition, that is, fill up all the instants of their days in a manner equally agreeable.

Of the employment of time.

That this employment is nearly the same in all professions.

That if empires are peopled with none but unfortunate persons, it is the effect of the imperfection of the laws, and the too unequal partition of riches.

That the people may be made more easy, and this ease would moderate in them the excessive desire of riches.

Recapitulation of the subjects treated of in Section VIII.

Of the several motives which at present justify that desire.

That among these motives the most powerful is the fear of disgust or weariness.

That the malady of disgust is more common and cruel than is imagined.

Of the influence of disgust on the manners of a people and the form of their government.

Of religion and its ceremonies, considered as a remedy for disgust.

That the only remedies for this evil are lively and distinct sensations.

Hence our love for eloquence, poetry, and all the pleasing arts, whose object is to excite sensations of that kind.

Particular proofs of this truth.

Of the arts of amenity; their impression on the opulent idler; they cannot free him from disgust.

That the most opulent are in general the most disgusted, because they are passive in almost all their pleasures.

That the passive pleasures are in general the most transient and most expensive.

That consequently it is the rich who feel most forcibly the want of riches.

That the rich man would be always moved without the trouble of moving himself.

That he is without motive to divest himself of idle-

ness, from which a moderate fortune necessarily frees other men.

Of the association of the ideas of happiness and riches in our minds; that this association is the effect of education.

That a different education may produce a contrary effect.

That then, without being equally rich and powerful, individuals may be, and think themselves, equally happy.

Of the remote utility of these principles.

That once convinced of this truth, men should no longer regard evil as inherent in the nature of society, but as an accident occasioned by the imperfection of their legislation.

SECTION IX.

Of the possibility of tracing out a good plan of legislation.

Of the obstacles which ignorance opposes to its publication.

Of the ridicule that is thrown on every new idea, and every profound study of morality and politics.

Of the hatred of ignorance for all reformation.

Of the difficulty of making good laws.

Of the first questions to be asked on this subject.

Of rewards; that they never corrupt the manners, of whatever kind they be, though it were a luxury of pleasure.

Recapitulation of the subjects treated of in Section IX.

Of the luxury of pleasures: that every pleasure decreed as a public acknowledgment, cherishes virtue, and makes the laws respected, whose destruction never is, as some pretend, the effect of the inconstancy of the human mind.

Of the true causes of the changes that happen in the laws of nations.

That these changes proceed from the imperfection of those laws themselves, and from the negligence of administrations, who know not how to restrain the ambition of neighbouring nations by the terror of their arms, nor that of their fellow-citizens by the sagacity of their regulations; and who, besides being educated in pernicious prejudices, favour an ignorance of truths whose publication would secure the public felicity.

That the publication of the truth is never fatal but to him by whom it is published.

That a knowledge of it, useful to nations, never molests their peace.

That one of the strongest proofs of this assertion is the slowness with which truth is propagated.

Of governments.

That the happiness of the prince is not annexed in any government, as is imagined, to the misery of the people.

That we owe the truth to mankind.

That the obligation to declare it supposes the free use of the means of discovering it.

Recapitulation of the subjects treated of in Section IX.

That when nations are deprived of this liberty they are plunged in ignorance.

Of the evils produced by an indifference to the truth.

That the legislator is not, as some pretend, ever obliged to sacrifice the happiness of the present generation to that of future generations.

That such a supposition is absurd.

That men ought to be the more excited to the search of truth; as being in general indifferent about it, they judge an opinion to be true or false, merely as it is their interest to believe it to be the one or the other.

That this interest will make them deny, on occasion, the truth of geometrical demonstrations.

That it makes men esteem in themselves the cruelty they detest in others.

That it makes them respect crimes.

That it makes saints.

That it proves to great men the superiority of their species over that of other men.

That it causes vice to be honoured in a protector.

That the interest of the powerful commands more imperiously than the truth, in general opinions.

That a secret interest has always concealed from the parliaments the conformity of the morality of the Jesuits with that of popery.

That interest makes men daily deny this maxim, "Do not to others what thou wouldst not they should do unto thee."

That

Recapitulation of the subjects treated of in Section X.

That it prevents the priest, who is an honest man, from seeing the evils produced by the Catholic religion and the projects of a sect that is intolerant because it is ambitious, and regicidal because it is intolerant.

Of the means employed by the church to subject nations.

Of the time when the Catholic church will suffer its pretensions to lie dormant.

Of the time when it will revive them.

The pretensions of the church proved by right.

The same pretensions proved by facts.

Of the means of enchaining ecclesiastical ambition.

That toleration which can alone restrain it, may, by enlightening the minds of men, secure the tranquillity and happiness of nations, whose characters are susceptible of all the forms that the law, the government, and especially public education can give them.

SECTION X.

Of the power of education, and the means of giving it the utmost degree of perfection. Of the obstacles to the progress of this science.

Of the facility with which, these obstacles being removed, the plan of an excellent education might be traced out.

Of education.

That it can do every thing.

That princes, like private persons, are the produce of their instruction.

That

Recapitulation of the subjects treated of in Section X.

That we cannot expect great princes without a great change in their education.

Of the principal advantages of a public over a private education.

A general idea of the corporeal education of man.

Of the time and situation in which man is susceptible of a moral education.

Of education relative to different professions.

Of the moral education of man.

Of the obstacles to the perfection of this part of education.

The interest of the priest, the first obstacle.

The imperfection of most governments, the second obstacle.

That every important reformation in the moral part of education supposes a reformation in the laws and form of government.

That this reformation made, and the obstacles that oppose the progress of instruction once removed, the problem of the best education possible will be resolved.

What I propose in the four following chapters is to prove the analogy of my opinions with those of Locke.

To shew all the importance and extent of the principle of corporeal sensibility.

To reply to the reproach of materialism and impiety.

To shew all the absurdity of such accusations, and the impossibility of any intelligent moralists escaping, in this respect, the censures of the ecclesiastics.

CHAP. I.

OF THE ANALOGY OF MY PRINCIPLES WITH THOSE OF LOCKE.

The understanding is nothing more than the assemblage of our ideas. Our ideas, says Locke, come to us by the senses; and from this principle, as from mine, it may be concluded that our understanding is nothing more than an acquisition.

To regard it as a mere gift of nature, or the effect of a particular organization, without being able to name the organ by which it is produced, is to bring back to philosophy the occult qualities; it is to believe without proof, and judge at a venture.

History and experience equally inform us that the understanding is independent of the greater or less acuteness of the senses; that men of different constitutions are susceptible of the same passions and the same ideas.

The principles of Locke, far from contradicting this opinion, confirm it; they prove that education makes us what we are; that men the more resemble each other as their instructions are more similar; and consequently that a German resembles a Frenchman more than an Asiatic; and another German more than a Frenchman;

Frenchman; and, in short, if the understandings of men be very different, it is because none of them have the same education.

Such are the facts on which I have composed this work; I offer it with more confidence to the public, as the analogy of my principles with those of Locke assure me of their truth.

If I were desirous of courting the protection of the theologians, I would add, that these principles are the most conformable to the ideas which a Christian ought to form of the justice of God.

In fact, if the understanding, the characters, and passions of men depend on the unequal perfection of their organs, and each individual were a different machine, how could the justice of heaven, or even that of earth, require the same effects from dissimilar machines? Would God have given the same law to all, without granting them all the same means of fulfilling it?

If a refined and delicate probity be that of precept, and if that kind of precept frequently suppose great intelligence, it follows, that all men commonly well organized, must be endowed by the Divinity with an equal aptitude to understanding.

Let it not be imagined, however, that I would maintain the truth of my principles by theological arguments; I do not accuse as fanatics, those whose opinions on this subject are different from mine: to oppose them with other arms than those of reason, would

would be to wound the enemy behind whom I durst not look in the face.

Experience and reason are the only judges of my principles: were their truth demonstrated, I should not conclude that these principles ought to be immediately and universally adopted. The truth is always propagated slowly. The Hungarians believed in vampires a long time after their non-existence had been demonstrated. The antiquity of an error renders it for a long time respectable. I therefore do not flatter myself with seeing the common race of men abandon, for my opinions, those in which they have been educated, and which they respect.

How many are there who, inwardly convinced of the fallacy of an opinion, still maintain it, because it is generally believed, and because they will not struggle against public opinion! There are few sincere lovers of the truth, few who employ themselves earnestly in the search after it, and who embrace it wherever they find it. The man who would dare to declare himself the apostle of the truth, must centre all his happiness in the possession of it.

Besides, to whom is it granted to perceive at once the truth of a new opinion? To a small number of young people, who having, at their entering the world, no fixed ideas, chuse the most rational. It is for them and posterity that the philosopher writes. The philosopher sees in the perspective of futurity the time when an opinion that is true, but singular and little known,

known, shall become the common and general opinion. He who cannot enjoy by anticipation the eulogies of posterity, but desires impatiently the glory of the present day, should refrain from the search after truth: it will not offer itself to his inquiry.

CHAP. II.

OF THE IMPORTANCE AND EXTENT OF THE PRINCIPLE OF CORPOREAL SENSIBILITY.

WHAT is a science? A series of propositions which all relate to one general and original principle. Is morality a science? Yes; if in corporeal sensation I have discovered the sole principle of which all the precepts of morality are the necessary consequences. It is an evident proof of the truth of this principle, that it explains all the modes of being of mankind, that it developes the causes of their understanding, their stupidity, their love, their hatred, their errors and contradictions. This principle ought to be the more easily and universally adopted, as the existence of corporeal sensibility is a fact allowed by all, as the idea of it is clear, the notion distinct, the expression determinate, and, lastly, as no error can mix itself with so simple an axiom.

Corporeal

Importance of the principle of corporeal sensibility.

Corporeal sensibility seems to have been given to men as a tutelar ángel, charged to watch incessantly over their preservation. Let men be happy; this perhaps is the sole view of nature, and the sole principle of morality. When the laws are good, private interest will never be destructive of that of the public: every one will be employed in pursuing his felicity; every one will be fortunate and just; because every one will perceive that his happiness depends upon that of his neighbour.

In numerous societies where the laws are still imperfect, if the villain, the fanatic, and the tyrant forget their duty, let death * strike the villain, the fanatic, the tyrant, and every enemy to the public welfare.

Pleasure and pain are the bonds by which private interest may be always united with that of the nation: they both take their source from corporeal sensibility. The sciences of morality and legislation cannot therefore be any thing else than deductions from this simple principle: I may also add, that its developement extends even to the several rules of the arts of amenity, whose object, as I have already said, is to excite sensations in us; and the more lively they are (10), the more beautiful and sublime the work they produce will appear.

* Our author doubtless means that they should receive the most condign punishment; but death, as I have elsewhere shewn, is not the most condign punishment for atrocious crimes. T.

Corporeal

Extent of the principle of corporeal sensibility.

Corporeal sensibility is man himself, and the principle of all that he produces; so that his knowledge never extends beyond that of the senses; all that is not subject to them is inaccessible to his understanding.

The scholastics however pretend, without their aid, to penetrate into the intellectual kingdoms: but these Sisyphi roll a stone that will incessantly fall back upon them. What is the produce of their vain declamations and eternal wranglings? What do we find in their immense volumes? A deluge of words extended over a desert of ideas.

To what is the science of man reducible? To two sorts of knowledge:

The one is that of the relation which objects have to him;

The other, that of the relation which objects have to each other.

Now what are these two sorts of knowledge, but two different developements of corporeal sensibility*?

My fellow-citizens may, after this work, see further and better than I do. I have shewn them the principle from which they may deduce the laws that are proper to establish their happiness. If its novelty surprise them,

* If men regard the principle of corporeal sensibility as destructive of the doctrine taught concerning the soul, they deceive themselves. If I be sensible, it is because I have a soul, a principle of life and sensation, to which you may always give what name you will.

them, and they doubt its truth, let them try to substitute for it, one whose existence shall be as universally acknowledged, of which they have as clear an idea, and from which they can draw as great a number of consequences. If there be none such, let them then regard corporeal sensibility as the sole touchstone by which, for the future, the truth or falsehood of each proposition in morality and politics is to be proved. Every proposition should be reputed false that cannot be deduced from this axiom. Error is the sole matter heterogeneous to truth. For the rest, I am not a legislator, and occupy but a small space in this universe: all that I am able to do for my fellow-citizens is to present them in this work with the sole principle of their knowledge. I have doubtless advanced nothing in this book contrary to true religion; but I have maintained the necessity of toleration: I have shewn the dangers to which the too great power of the priesthood equally exposes both prince and people; I have pointed out the barrier that may be opposed to its ambition: I am therefore in their sight impious: but shall I appear so in the eyes of the public?

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

OF THE ACCUSATIONS OF MATERIALISM AND IMPIETY, AND OF THEIR ABSURDITY.

The hatred of the theologians may be dreaded at Paris and Lisbon; but there are countries where that hatred is impotent; where the reproach of impiety is no longer regarded; where every accusation of that kind is become ridiculous, and considered as a vague expression of monastic fury and stupidity.

Of what impiety moreover can they accuse me? have in no part of this work denied the Trinity, the divinity of Jesus, the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the dead, nor even any other article of the popish creed: I have not therefore in any way attacked religion.

But the Jesuits have accused the Jansenists of materialism; they may therefore accuse me of it: be it so; I shall content myself with answering them, that they have no complete ideas of matter; that they know nothing but body; that the word *materialist* is as obscure to them as to me; that we are in this respect equally ignorant, but that they are more fanatical.

Every consistent book is regarded with horror by the theologians.

"La

The Catholic church desires to be powerful.

"La raison a leurs yeux n'est jamais Catholique."
Reason is never Catholic in their eyes.

The hereditary enemies of every rational work, perhaps they will anathematise this; yet have I said no evil of them that was not absolutely indispensible. I could have written after St. Jerome, that the church is the whore of Babylon: I have not done it. Where I take part against the priests, it is in favour of nations and of sovereigns. Where I plead the cause of toleration, it is to prevent their committing new crimes.

But, they will say, if toleration be established, if the church model its conduct after that of Jesus, under what pretence can it imprison and burn citizens, assassinate princes, &c. the church, then less dreaded, will be less respected. Now what signifies the example of Jesus? What the church desires is to be powerful. A proof of this

Is the approbation it has given to the morality of the Jesuits;

The title of Vice-God granted to its head;

And, lastly, the belief of his infallibility, in spite of the express declaration of scripture, *that every man is a liar.*

Would the priest, without the motive of ambition, have affirmed that the pope holds a middle rank between God and man? *Nec Deus, nec homo, quia neuter est, sed inter utrumque.* Without a similar motive, would the pope have suffered himself to be treated as a demi-god? Would he have permitted Stephen Patracenus to write, that in the pope resided all power

over all the powers of heaven and earth: *In papa est omnis potestas, supra omnes potestates tam cœli quam terræ.* Would Boniface VIII. in an assembly held at Rome on occasion of the jubilee, have said, I am pope and emperor, I have power over heaven and earth: *Ego sum pontifex & imperator, terrestre ac celeste imperium habeo.* Would the pope have approved the phrase in the common law, where he is called the Lord God? *Dominus Deus noster.* Would Nicholas have boasted of having been called God by Constantine? *Canon Satis evidenter.* Dist. 96. Would the theologians have declared, in other canons, "That the pope is as much "above the emperor, as pure gold is above base lead: "that the emperors receive their authority from the "pope, as the moon receives her light from the sun; "that the emperors consequently will never be any "thing else than moons*."

To conclude, would the priests, to justify their intolerance, have made the Divinity an unjust, revengeful,

* One of the canonical doctors, with still greater boldness, said, *Papa est supra me, extra me, papa est omnis & supra omnia; papa est dominus dominantium, papa potest mutare quadrata rotundis*; that is, the pope is within me, and without me; the pope is all, and above all; he is the lord of lords, and of a square he can make a circle. What proposition can be the more impious, if by the confession of the theologians, the Divinity cannot make a stick without two ends.

and wrathful tyrant? would they have heaped on God all the vices of men*?

If every mean of acquiring power appear lawful to the priesthood, every obstacle opposed to the increase of that power must appear an impiety; I therefore am impious in their eyes. Now such is, in certain countries, the power of the priest over the prince, that the former can at his pleasure irritate the latter against those very authors who defend the rights of his crown: how many devout souls moreover can they excite to worry a writer!

I have read the story of the rose-coloured geese in Crebillon; and in the world I have always seen that amiable and devout troop guided by stupid, filthy, and iniquitous monks. The geese always think as he does; they see impiety wherever he points it out to them.

This moreover is not the only reproach they will make me; the slave and the courtier will accuse me of having spoken evil of arbitrary power: I have certainly painted it in its true colours; but it was from a love to the people, and to princes themselves. Every

* Few nations, say travellers, honour the devil under his true name; but many honour him under that of God. When a people adore a Being whose laws are incomprehensible, a Being that requires the belief of what is incredible, commands what is impracticable, punishes a weakness with eternal torments, and damns men for not doing what it is impossible they should do; it is evident that such people, under the name of God, worship the devil. See a treatise on *False Religion*, from which I have taken this passage.

 sovereign,

sovereign, as history proves, is either dependent on an army, if he bear the scepter of arbitrary power *, or dependent on the law, if he command a limited monarchy. Now of these two dependencies, which is the most desirable for the prince? In which is his person the least exposed? The latter.

The laws govern a free people.

Denunciations, force, and atrocity govern a people of slaves; and among them internal intrigues and the caprice of the army frequently decide the life of the monarch.

I shall not extend this subject any farther.

In political subjects, a word is sufficient to inform mankind: it is not so in religious matters; the light

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† We may distinguish two sorts of despotism; the one of power, the other of practice: this new distinction is fruitful in consequences. A prince is a despot in power, when by the number of his troops, and the servility of the minds of the people, he has acquired the power necessary to dispose of the property, the life, and liberty of his subjects at his pleasure.

As long as a prince does not use this power, as long as the people do not suffer, they think the government good, and remain unconcerned.

But if after having acquired the power to hurt, the prince put it in practice, and deprive the people of their properties, they are then irritated, they would throw off the yoke that galls them; but it is too late: it is at the birth of that unlimited power that the evils they feel should have been stifled.

of

of reason rarely enters the dwellings of the devout*. They may hereafter, when better instructed, at last acknowledge that there is no work exempt from the accusation of impiety.

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* Aboulola, the most famous of the Arabic poets, had no opinion of the discernment of devotees, The following is a translation of some of his stanzas.

Issa is come; he has abolished the laws of Maussai.

Mahomet has followed him; he introduced prayers five times each day.

His followers pretend that no other prophet will come.

They employ themselves in useless prayers from morning to night.

Tell me now, since you have lived under one of these laws, have you enjoyed more sun and moon?

If you answer me impertinently, I shall lift up my voice against you; but if you speak sincerely, I shall continue to speak quite gently.

The Christians in their pursuits wander here and there, and the Mussulmans are quite out of their way.

The Jews are nothing more than mummies; and the magi of Persia are mere dreamers.

The world is divided into two classes of men •

The one have understanding, but no religion,

The other have, religion but no understanding.

CHAP. IV.

OF THE IMPOSSIBILITY FOR ANY INTELLIGENT MORALIST TO ESCAPE ECCLESIASTICAL CENSURES.

When a man defends the rights of the people, he injures the interest of the church, which seeks a pretence to accuse him, and such pretence it always finds.

The scriptures are the book of God, and their divers interpretations form the different sects of Christians: it is therefore on the scriptures that the heresies are founded.

Jesus favoured that of the Arians, when he said, "My father is greater than I.". Jesus changed all our ideas of the Divinity, when he seemed to regard him as the author of evil, and said in his prayer, "Lead "us not into temptation." Now if in the Lord's prayer itself we meet with so extraordinary a proposition, in what human work may not monastic hatred and malice discover heresy? If we write in favour of humanity, the sacerdotal interest becomes offended, and then we may cry out with the prophet, "Deliver "my work from iniquitous lips, and from a deceitful "tongue *." If therefore they should deduce from

* How many theological libels have been published against the this

this work some apparently wicked conclusions, I should not be surprised. What God has not done in the scriptures, I have certainly not done in this book; I have not that absurd and blasphemous pride. What proposition is there in geometry itself from which, on occasion, some absurd and even impious consequence may not be deduced?

A mathematical point, for example, has not according to geometricians, either length, breadth, or depth: now if a line be composed of a certain number of points; a surface of a certain number of lines; a cube of a certain number of surfaces; and if a point has no parts, there cannot exist either lines, surfaces or cubes, bodies, or sensible objects; there can be no palaces that contain libraries, or any books that contain scriptures and revelations.

If such be the immediate consequence of the definition of a mathematical point, what book can be secure from the reproach of impiety? The system of

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Treatise on the Mind! What was the author's crime? The discovering the secret of the church, which consists in debasing mankind, in order to draw from them the most money and most respect possible. Some honest priests defended that work, but their number was too small; they had not a majority of voices among the clergy: it was, above all, the archbishop of Paris who urged the Sorbonne to rise against the book on the Mind, which they did not understand: it was the prophet Balaam, who, mounted on his ass, pressed forward without perceiving the spirit or angel that opposed him.

grace itself is not exempt. The theologians then maintain, at the same time, that inequality of being just, God grants a sufficient grace to all, and yet that this sufficient grace will not suffice. What an absurd and impious contradiction!

In matters of religion, consequences ought never to be inferred from principle. A man is not an infidel, when he does not formally and positively deny some article of faith.

If the monks and the priests will deign, like true Christians, to interpret charitably, such passages as may chance to slip into a philosophic work, they will find nothing that is not orthodox.

In this work I have pleaded the cause of toleration, and consequently of humanity: but is a man an atheist because he is humane?

If I would have paid less regard to reason perhaps, after the example of the Jansenists, I should have submitted this work to the decision of the first council, and have begged the readers to have seen with their eyes, and have judged with their reason. Of this I can assure the reader, that in composing this book, my object has been to secure the happiness of nations, and the lives of sovereigns. If I have wounded ecclesiastical pride, it was because, like Lucian, "I better "liked to displease in speaking the truth, than to "please by relating fables."

Though some errors should be discovered in this work, I shall always bear myself this testimony, that

I have

I have not at least intentionally erred, but have said what I thought true and useful to individuals, and to nations. Who then can be my enemy? and who will rise up against me? They alone who hate the truth, and wish ill to their country. For the rest, if the papist calumniate me, I shall cry with the prophet, "Let "them curse me, but do thou Lord bless me."

What I have in particular to inform the clergy of France is, that their immoderate and ridiculous fury against letters, renders them suspected and odious to Europe. A man writes a book, that book is full of truths or errors. In the first case, why under the name of the author, persecute truth itself? In the other case, why punish in a writer, errors that are evidently involuntary? Whoever does not write for hire, or to please a party, can propose to himself nothing but glory as the reward of his labours. Now glory is always attached to the truth: if by searching after it I fall into an error, the oblivion in which my name and my work will be plunged will be my punishment, and the only punishment I shall deserve. If men would have death to be the punishment of a dubious or false judgment, what writer could be secure of his life? and who shall throw the first stone? What do the priests propose by requiring the punishment of an author? If they pursue an error with fire and sword, they give it credit. If they pursue a truth with the same rancour, they render its propagation more rapid. What has the conduct of the Popish

clergy hitherto proved? Merely that they have been, and always will be, persecutors of the truth. More moderation would doubtless become them better. Moderation is at all times decent; but it is even necessary in an age when cruelty irritates the minds of men, but does not subject them.

Virtus non territa monstris.

NOTES.

NOTES ON SECTION X.

NOTES.

1. (Page 410.) To what may the science of education be reduced? To the means of compelling mankind to acquire those virtues and talents which we require in them. Is there any thing impossible to education? No.

Does a child of the village fear spectres, and you would dispel that fear in him? Leave him in a wood, with the paths of which he is acquainted; follow him without his perceiving it, and let him return to the house alone. After three or four walks he will see no more spectres in the wood; he will have acquired by habit and necessity all the courage with which they inspire young peasants.

2. (p. 411.) If parents were to interest themselves as warmly as they pretend, in the education of their children, they would certainly take more care of them. Whom would they chuse for nurses? Women, who being previously divested, by intelligent persons, of their ridiculous tales and maxims, would be qualified to correct the faults of the most tender infancy. Parents would take care that their sons, after being attended, till six years old, by women, should then enter the houses of public instruction, where, far from the dissipations of the world, they should remain till seventeen or eighteen years old; that is, till the time they enter the world, and there receive the education of men: an education doubtless the most important, but entirely dependent on the societies they frequent, the situations in which they are placed, and the form of government under which they live.

3. (p. 414.) If violent exercises fortify not only the body, but also

NOTES ON SECTION X.

also the temperament, it is perhaps because they retard in man the premature gratification of certain pleasures.

It is not the reproaches of a mother, or the sermons of a curate, but fatigue alone that can damp the fierce desires of youth.

The more a young man perspires, the more animal spirits he exhausts in the exercises of the body and the mind, the less his imagination will be heated, the less inclination he will have to love.

Perhaps the excessive love of women in Asia, is the effect of the idleness of body and mind with those people. It is certain, that in Canada, the savage, daily exhausted by hunting and fishing is in general little sensible to pleasure. The tardy love of women among the ancient Germans was doubtless the effect of the same cause. M. Rousseau, p. 144. vol. iii. of Emilius, highly extols the continence of that people, and regards it as the cause of their valour. I make, as well as M. Rousseau, great account of continence; but I do not agree with him that it is the mother of courage.

Fable and history inform us that Hercules, Theseus, Achilles, Alexander, Mahomet, Henry IV. marshal Saxe, &c. were brave, but not chaste. Among the monks there are some who are very chaste, but few that are brave.

When speaking of the love of women and the Socratic love, the wise Plutarch examines which of them most excites men to great actions, and mentions on the subject the ancient heroes; he is clearly of a different opinion from M. Rousseau. We may then conclude, after Plutarch and history, that courage is not the necessary consequence of chastity.

To conclude, I do not preserve less respect for this virtue than that which many people also have for a chastity of ideas very different. Nothing is more imprudent in the eyes of a Mahometan woman than to see a German, Italian, or French woman going to her devotion with a bare face.

4. (p. 426.) There have been, it is said, people who have had

their

NOTES ON SECTION X.

their property in common; and there are some who highly extol this community of property: there are no happy people, they say, but those without property. They cite for example the Scythians, and Tartars, and Spartans.

With regard to the Scythians and Tartars, they always preserved the property of their cattle, and in that property consisted all their wealth. As to the Spartans, we know they had slaves, and that each of them possessed one of the 39000 portions of land that composed the territory of Lacedæmon or Laconia: the Spartans therefore had property.

However virtuous they may have been, history informs us that, like other men, the Lacedæmonians would reap without sowing, and that they consequently obliged the Helotes to cultivate their grounds. Those Helotes were the negroes of the republic: they fertilised the earth. Hence the want of slaves, and perhaps the necessity of war.

We therefore see, even by the Lacodæmonian form of government, that the free part of the inhabitants could not be happy but at the expence of the others; and that the pretended community of property among the Spartans, could not, whatever some pretend, operate the miracle of universal felicity.

Under the government of the Jesuits, the inhabitants of Paraguay cultivated the land in common, and with their own hands. Were they the more happy? I doubt it; and the indifference with which they received the account of the destruction of the order justifies this doubt. These people, without property, were without energy, and without emulation. But could not the hope of glory and importance animate their minds? No: glory and importance are among the means of acquiring real pleasures. Now what pleasure, in those countries, could one enjoy more than another?

When we consider the kind, and the small number of societies in which the community of property has been practised, we must always suppose that some secret obstacles obstruct the formation as well as the happiness of such societies. To form a just judgment on

NOTES ON SECTION X.

on this question, we should examine, with the utmost attention, if the existence of such a society be equally possible in every situation, and to this end consider it,

1. In an Island.

2. In a country divided by vast desarts, and surrounded by immense forests, whose conquest for that reason would be equally difficult and undesirable.

3. In a country where the inhabitants, wandering like the Tartars with their herds, can always escape the pursuit of an enemy.

4. In a country covered with cities, and surrounded by powerful nations; and see, in the last place, if in this situation (doubtless the most common) this society can preserve that degree of emulation, understanding, and courage, necessary to resist a people who are proprietors, learned and intelligent.

I shall not further investigate a question whose truth or fallacy the less affects my subject: as wherever the community of goods is not established, property ought to be sacred.

5. (p. 430.) Is the right of bequeathing property by will useful or detrimental to society? This is a problem not yet resolved. This right, say some, is a right of property of which a citizen cannot be legally deprived. Every man, say others, has, during his life, the right of disposing of his property at his pleasure; but at his death he ceases to be a proprietor. The dead have nothing. The right of transferring his property to this or that person may have been conferred on him by law. Now supposing this right to occasion an infinity of legislations, and that all things considered, it was found more detrimental than useful to society, who can deny that society the right of changing a law which it finds mischievous.

6. (ibid.) *The will of man is vagrant,* say the laws, and yet those laws ordain the indissolubility of marriage. What contradiction! and what follows from it? The misery of a great number of married people. Now misery begets hatred between them, and hatred frequently the most atrocious crimes. But what gave occasion

casion to the indissolubility of marriage? The profession of the husbandmen, which was exercised by the first of mankind.

In this state, the daily and reciprocal assistance which the married required of each other, lightened the yoke of marriage. While the husband tilled the field, the wife fed the poultry, led the cattle to water sheared the sheep, prepared the dinner of her husband, children, and domestics; the man and wife thus occupied with the same object, that is, the improvement of their land, were seldom together, and consequently free from a disgust of each other: it therefore is not wonderful that the husband and wife being always in action, and always necessary to each other, should sometimes be even fond of their indissoluble contract.

If it be not the same with the priest, the soldier, and the magistrate, it is because in these professions the husband and wife are less necessary to each other. In fact, of what use can a wife be to a husband in the functions of a mufti, a visir, a cadi, &c.? A wife with them is nothing more than an article of luxury and pleasure. Such are the causes that among different nations have modified the union of the two sexes in an infinity of different manners. There are countries where men have many wives and many concubines; in other countries they do not marry till after three or four years of trial; and there are other countries where women are in common, or where the union of man and wife does not last longer than they love each other: now let us suppose that in the establishment of a new form of marriage, the legislature, freed from the tyranny of prejudices, and custom, should propose for its sole object the public good, and the greatest happiness of the man and wife; and not content with promoting divorces, should investigate the means of rendering the conjugal union the most delicious possible; these means found, the form of marriage would become invariable: for no one can have a right to substitute less beneficial for more beneficial laws, to diminish the sum of the national happiness, or even to oppose the complaints of individuals, when their pleasures are not incompatible with the happiness

piness of the majority. But whence comes it that this important problem has not yet been resolved? Because nations being obstinately attached to their customs, will not change them but when forced to it by absolute necessity. Now, however bad the present form of marriage may be, yet societies subsist, though they subsist less happily, and the idleness of legislatures rests contented.

7. (p 432.) The want of the social virtues may be perceived even by childhood itself. Would we deeply engrave in the memory of a child the principles of justice; let a tribunal be erected for that purpose in every college, where the children themselves may judge the differences that arise between them; let the sentences of this little tribunal be carried by appeal before the master, and by him be corrected or confirmed, according as they are just or unjust. Let him be employed to commit such injuries or offences against the pupils as will be difficult to be proved and will oblige the plaintiff to reflect on his cause in order to support it, and the tribunal of children to reflect in order to judge it properly.

The pupils by this method being obliged to reflect perpetually on the precepts of justice will soon acquire clear ideas of it. It was by a method nearly similar to this that M. Rousseau gave to his Emilius the first notions of property. Nothing can be more ingenious than this method, and yet it is neglected. Had M. Rousseau made this discovery only, I should have numbered him among the benefactors of humanity, and have willingly erected to him the statue he demands.

Sufficient attention is not paid to the forming the judgment of children. When we have charged their memory with an infinity of little facts, we are satisfied. What follows? The child is a prodigy of loquacity, and the man a prodigy of nonsense.

To form the judgment of a pupil, what should be done? Make him first reason on what concerns him personally. As his understanding expands, he should be made to apply it to more important objects For this purpose, the plan of the laws and customs of

NOTES ON SECTION X.

of different people should be laid before him; he should be made to judge of the sagacity and the folly of those customs and laws and at last made to weigh their perfection or imperfection by the balance of the greatest happiness and greatest interest of a republic. It is by meditating on the principle of national utility that a child acquires just and general ideas of morality; his mind moreover being exercised by these grand objects, becomes more adapted to every sort of study.

The more easy application becomes, the more force the mind acquires. A child cannot be too early accustomed to the fatigue of attention; and to make him contract the habit of it, we should, whatever M. Rousseau may say, sometimes have recourse to fear. It is by jnst and severe masters that the best scholars are in general formed. The child, like the man, is moved only by the hope of pleasure and the fear of pain. If the child be yet sensible to pleasure, unsusceptible of the love of glory, and without emulation; it is the fear of punishment alone that can fix his attention. Fear is, in public education, a resource to which masters are indispensibly obliged to recur, but which they ought to manage with prudence.

8. (p. 449.) Under every government where I cannot be happy but by the misery of others, I shall be wretched. There is no remedy for this evil but by a reformation in the government. But what means are there to make the people consent to this reformation, and acknowledge the iniquity of their laws? How can you make the blind see? Men may indeed be instructed by books; but the greatest part of them do not read: they may also be informed by preaching, but the people in power forbid preaching against vices which they imagine to be advantageous to themselves. The difficulty of instructing the people in their real interest, from the opposition of governments to every wise reformation must therefore eternise their errors.

9. (ibid.) If the study of the Latin languages were as highly useful as perhaps it is insignificant, and we would, in the least time

possible, engrave all its words in the mind of a child, what should be done? Place him among people who speak nothing but Latin. If a mariner, cast by a tempest on an island, of whose language he is ignorant, learns to speak it soon, it is because he has want and necessity for masters. Now if a child be placed as nearly as may be in the same circumstances, he will learn more Latin in two years, than he will learn at college in ten.

10. (p 477.) Why in poetry does the beautiful in sentiment and images strike more generally than the beautiful in ideas? Because men have sensibility before they have discernment; that is, they receive sensations before they compare them with each other.

FINIS.

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SOCIETY OF WRITERS TO